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# JOHN DEAN CATON'S REMINISCENCES OF CHICAGO IN 1833 AND 1834

*Edited by*  
*HARRY E. PRATT*

A Quaker lad of twenty-one from New York, John Dean Caton, took Chicago for his home on June 19, 1833. He was the first practising lawyer in the town of 250 people, and in December became Corporation Counsel for the lately incorporated town.

From 1842 to 1864 Caton was a member of the Illinois Supreme Court, serving six years as Chief Justice. He organized and developed the Illinois and Mississippi Telegraph Company and with a large fortune derived from it, retired and lived for many years at 1900 Calumet Avenue, Chicago.

The following recollections of Chicago in 1833 were written by Judge Caton in 1869. He died in Chicago in 1894.

## JOHN DEAN CATON'S REMINISCENCES

As we neared the west shore the wind died away and it was late in the afternoon before we came to anchor off the mouth of the Chicago River. At that time and for several years later vessels could not enter the harbor at Chicago but were obliged to anchor off from half to three-quarters of a mile from shore, from and to which all freight and passengers had to be transported in lighters. Our yawl was lowered to be sent on shore for a lighter and anxious to



## CHICAGO IN 1833 AND 1834

stand upon the soil of Illinois which I designed should be my state in the future I volunteered and was accepted for service. We pulled away heartily and soon reached the sandbar where is now the mouth of the harbor.

I leaped ashore and stood upon the land of the state of my adoption. She is a glorious and a gallant state and anyone in any part of the world may feel proud to say *I am an Illinoian*. Then she was young and feeble. Her broad prairies were then the home of the Pottowattomies. But here was the soil and the climate—nature had done all that could be asked.

As we passed down the river which was separated from the lake by a narrow sandbar but little above the level of the water and over which the waves broke in heavy storms, my attention was arrested by several objects sticking out of the alluvial banks which on inquiry I found were coffins. Here was the military cemetery where had been buried the victims of the cholera the year before and the encroachments of the lake were fast exposing and finally washing away the remains of the dead. It seemed repulsive that the remains of human beings should be left thus exposed and no one to gather them up and give them a quiet resting place.

But we pulled away at the oars and swept swiftly down the river for half a mile parallel with the lake to where its waters were discharged into the lake over the bar upon which there was not more than eighteen inches of water in the channel and after we had rounded out into the lake we pulled for the schooner which was anchored three-quarters of a mile distant.

## MACKINAW BOATS

The lighters upon which all goods and passengers were then landed were called mackinaw boats and were generally about twenty-five feet long, sharp at both ends alike,



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eight to ten feet wide, nearly three feet high and flat bottomed. This was the kind of boat in which the fur trade had been carried on on the upper lakes for generations and were capable of standing a heavy sea and good weather with a sail and lee or center board. They were propelled by oars and sails for which a mast could be readily stripped. They rarely ventured far into the lake but coasted along near the shore where they could be thrown upon the sandy beach without much danger. So soon as the harbor was opened these mackinaw boats disappeared.

## BUSINESS HOUSES

Leaving our ship we pulled away for the mouth of the river which we soon entered and directly passed the bend around old Fort Dearborn and steered directly up the river to the junction of its two branches or Wolf Point, as it was called then which there unite from opposite directions, north and south, whence they flow in east to the lake. We landed at a few plank laid at the edge of the river which served for a small boat wharf, about seventy feet back of which stood a log tavern at which Wm. W. Wattles entertained travelers with execrable coffee without milk. This was the only hotel in Chicago in June 1833, about the 19th of which month I made this memorable landing.

After supper I took a survey of the town. Across each branch of the river a short way from the junction was a crazy bridge. At the Point or west of the junction besides the log hotel were a few temporary shanties newly erected and a good sized two-story store well built and finished and kept by Robert A. Kinzie, standing nearly in front of the bridge across the south branch. I passed across this bridge and pursued my way down the river bank. First I came to James Kinzie's log store standing near the corner of Lake street. A little further east was the store of John S. C. Hogan which was a double log building. Then came



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James Reed's cabinet shop, a small log building. Then I came to the store of P. F. W. Peck near the corner of Wells and Water streets. This was a good sized two-story framed building and well furnished and painted. Next was the log store of Madore Beaubien on the west corner of Dearborn and South Water street and on the opposite corner was the warehouse of Newberry and Dale, a good sized one-story frame building.

East of this was a small grocery store of E. B. Williams who has since been Mayor of the city. He has acquired wealth and is now a much respected citizen of Chicago. Then came the bakery of E. H. Haddock, who still lives in Chicago, wealthy and respected. Next east was the log carpenter's shop of Russel E. Heacock, who was by profession a lawyer and by practice a carpenter and a justice of the peace. His shop was at the edge of a slough which emptied into the river where State street is. These were all the buildings which were occupied along Water street from the Point to the Fort. Several others were in the process of erection, the largest of which was the drug store of Pruyne and Kimberly which was soon after fit for occupancy as also a small dwelling erected by John R. Boyer.

## NO STREETS IN 1833

There was not even a wagon track upon any street in Chicago. Every one drove where he pleased across the prairie from one building to another. Along where South Water street is was a foot path with logs of wood laid across the slough where Wells and State streets are, upon which foot men could cross. Back from the river were several dwellings. Between State and Dearborn and Lake and Water streets was a log boarding house kept by Dexter Graves. This was the crack boarding house of Chicago at that day and was more aristocratic than the hotel at the Point. I enjoyed a room at the boarding house of Mr.



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Graves, not as spacious as are afforded at the Tremont or Sherman at this day, still comfortable and the best that could at that time be obtained.

The room was the attic of the log cabin in which there were seven beds occupied by fourteen of us. The heads of the beds were chucked up under the eaves so that when we laid down the rafters were near our faces. The feet of the beds were nearly a yard apart, the sides were two feet or more. Such were the quarters in which I spent my first summer in Chicago.

On the North side of the river were several dwellings. Opposite the fort was a large log structure occupied by Dr. E. Harmon and up near the Point another occupied by J. D. Harmon, a justice of the peace. Nearly opposite Dearborn street was the residence and office of Richard I. Hamilton, who was clerk of the circuit court and of the county court and also judge of probate. Several other residences also were on the north side. The fort was in good order and occupied by two companies of regulars.

## FORT DEARBORN

Near the shore of the lake, on the military reservation south of the garrison was an orchard with apple trees six or eight inches in diameter and the enclosure of which also embraced the cemetery of the garrison. At the south end of this enclosure and about at the eastern extremity of Madison street was a tolerably comfortable old frame house occupied by Major Handy, who filled some sinecure office in connection with the harbor though I never heard of his doing any particular good, nor any harm. About the house was an old garden with a row of neglected currant bushes, though I never saw any fruit on them.

## OLD SETTLERS

Some still remain as representatives of that ancient stock ;



## CHICAGO IN 1833 AND 1834

John H. Kinzie and his excellent and accomplished lady still are there and so are George W. Snow and his charming and amiable wife. Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Williams were there then and still are there. E. H. Haddock was there a young man and Mrs. Haddock then Miss Graves, was among the few young ladies of Chicago. Besides her were Miss Hatchleys, afterwards Mrs. Gholson Kircheville and the two Misses Harmon, daughters of Dr. Harmon, and I may add the two Misses Beaubien, daughters of Col. Beaubien, whose mother was an Indian woman. These constituted the young ladies of Chicago at the time of my arrival.

### MANUFACTURERS AND ENTERPRISES

Of the manufacturers of Chicago at that time I remember a tannery by a Mr. Miller, north of the junction; a small cabinet shop by Jas. H. Reed between South Water street and Lake street, near Wells; two bakeries, one by Willmaker and the other by E. H. Haddock; a blacksmith shop and a carpenter shop.

The town was full of strangers and more flocking in daily. All was activity and enterprise, and preparations for building everywhere. I arrived in Chicago at what may be termed the very commencement of its improvements. Already a few frames had been raised and every few days witnessed another and only a few weeks elapsed till almost each day witnessed the rise of a new building as the increase of the supply of lumber and of mechanics enabled the newcomers to build houses for themselves and places for their business.

No mills had yet been started in the pine forests of Lake Michigan and the timber brought in from across the lake was mostly whitewood. Some was brought from the Wabash by teams and a sawmill had been built on the east side of the north branch about a mile above the Point the year



before which assisted to supply the rapidly increasing demand. There was a mill at Lawton's on the DesPlaines, twelve miles west and one at Walker's Grove, now Plainfield, forty miles west owned by Capt. Walker. However, the country was then so wet and much of the time the roads so bad that it was difficult and expensive to move lumber from them to Chicago. Besides settlers on the farming lands now began to arrive which created a country demand which their limited capacity was unable to supply. I remember one load in particular of red cherry from the Wabash country which was purchased by James H. Reed, the sole cabinet maker of Chicago, who did all his own work.

The most substantial dwelling built in Chicago during that summer was the home of Dr. John T. Temple on the corner of Wells and Lake streets, the lumber for which formed the raft on which I floated down the St. Joseph River in Michigan on my way to Chicago. Also the same summer was put up the Sauganash Hotel at the corner of Lake and East Market streets, although it was not finished until the following winter. So also the Mansion House by Mr. Graves on Lake street just north of the east portion of where the Tremont now stands. This new structure was immediately south of and adjoined the log cabin in which I boarded that summer. These three buildings were regular frames but nearly all the buildings put up that year were, what was aptly described as Balloon frames, that is two by six joists for sills, studs two by four toed onto the sills by nails, a strip of inch board for plate and, if one story strips of inch boards for joists or if two story, two inch joists to support the upper floor spiked to the studs and supported also by strips of inch boards under them nailed to the studs. The rafters were one or two inches according to the size of the building. No braces were introduced. For this the siding and lathing or casing was alone depended upon and yet they rarely blew down, and I have



## CHICAGO IN 1833 AND 1834

known but few lives lost in that way. It required but little mechanical skill to build one. It was not uncommon to see one rise in a single day, and constituting the next day the snug home of a young and enterprising couple, the next with a blanket hanging up for a door with perhaps one or two flaxen-haired bright-eyed urchins lifting one corner and peeping out on the busy world around them. *Such was the first stage of Chicago growth.*

Whitewood, a species of poplar, was brought from the St. Joseph River on schooners, one of which, "The Chicago Packet" was owned and run by Capt. David Carver. This Capt. Carver was an eccentric old bachelor, who was supposed to have a soft spot in his head somewhere and still was a very clever man and rather shrewd withal in many respects. He made regular trips to St. Joseph always returning loaded with lumber and as many passengers as could find standing room on the decks. She was as black as night, of about one hundred tons burthen, and both top-masts gone and a very dull sailor, with a very bad habit of rolling and pitching on the least provocation. But David kept her on the jump and she made money for the worthy bachelor. The *Packet* was the first of that immense marine interest now owned in Chicago.

### BUSINESSMEN

A few days enabled me to make the acquaintance of most of the old residents of the place, that is those who had been there long enough to find a home and become actual settlers of the new city. I found but one lawyer in the place, the late Giles Spring and he had been there but a few days and had as yet found no professional business to encourage him. I found him at Mr. Graves, and of course we soon became well acquainted.

The postmaster of Chicago was John S. C. Hogan who had resided there for some years. He was a young man, of



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courteous, genial, and religious disposition and manners. He owned the entire triangular block enclosed by South Water, Lake and Wells Streets except a small lot on Water street which he had or did soon after sell to Dr. Temple for an office. His log store was near the middle of the block on S. Water street and in the attic of this he kept the mail matter in a small shoe box which was reached by crawling up a ladder. The first time I saw it, all the mail matter in the shoe box lay promiscuously in a pile and could all have been placed in my hat.

## NATURAL BEAUTY

Chicago at that time afforded many delightful rambles and nothing was more congenial to my taste and inclinations than to trace them all out and become familiar with every secluded nook and romantic place to be found in the vicinity. Although there was no rocky glen or gushing fountain, no deep ravine, or foaming waterfall, there were along where Michigan Avenue now is walled with palatial mansions innumerable sand hills rising to a considerable height, overrun by the wild juniper loaded with its fragrant berries at the feet of which stretched away to the southeast the soft smooth beach of firm glistening sand laned with the gentle pulsations of the placid lake as its breathing bosom gently swelled; as a thing of life in deep repose when not a breath of air disturbed its calm serenity. Many an hour of pure delight in the soft summer evenings have I spent seated on these hills of sand to observe the full moon rise as if from the bosom of the lake.

In these moonlit watchings sometimes the *Packet* would be seen stealing before the gentle breeze to her quiet anchorage in the waves a mile from shore, for there was no Chicago harbor then, or else admonished of a coming storm she would dispatch her half loaded lighter to the shore, hurriedly make all sail to the middle of the lake to secure



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safe sea room, or sometimes a sail boat with a joyous party of gladsome hearts would be seen on the verge of the horizon, gaily dipping her way over the gently rolling waves, but generally all was still as the profoundest solitude, save the gentle ripple of the swells which ride on the bosom of the lake in calmest time or the deafening roar of the great waves when the tempest raged in its angry moods.

A pleasant ramble was also found along the beach north of the river where also the drifting sand had been piled by the shifting winds into a thousand hills stretching farther back from the waters than on the south, but here the juniper bush was replaced by a stunted growth of scraggy pines often hilled high up by the drifting sand. Here the cool shade afforded a delightful retreat in the heat of the day where the soothing songs of the birds mingled with the music of the waters. Further back was a broad ramble among stately oaks sparsely scattered over the even plain among which a horseman could be seen at a great distance, and if one sought a deeper solitude it might be found still further west in the densely tangled mass of bushes among which one could not see a deer at a distance of twenty feet.

Along the south branch on the east side was a dense forest mostly of young growth extending from Madison street for two miles to the bend of the river in some places eighty rods wide; and further up the river on the opposite side was a large woods of a nobler growth extending as far up as the forks of the south branch, where Bridgeport now is. At the western extremity of this Col. Beaubien had once had a trading post which he called Hard Scrabble, which at that time had fallen into ruins, and further east and in the body of the timber a little old Irishman named Welch had built his cabin and cleared a small garden where he and his son Pat lived in what may be called low back style. Pat was rather a graceless wight more given to drink than to work. The old man subsequently obtained a pre-emption



on a quarter section of the fractional quarter on which he had squatted. It is now worth millions. I think the old man had to sell a part of the land to satisfy the claims against Sheriff Garvin for whom he was surety, but most of it was inherited by his hopeful son Pat who died before he had squandered much of it.

I took a stroll one evening out on the prairie near where the court house now stands to the Hoosier camp ground where was a large encampment of Hoosier wagons called prairie schooners. Most of the business of Chicago was done with this fleet of prairie craft consisting of large canvas covered wagons drawn by three to five yoke of oxen, bringing to Chicago the products of the Wabash Valley in the neighborhood of Danville and below and taking back salt, groceries, and other goods which the Chicago market even then afforded. They slept in their wagons, cooking their bacon on a small fire made on the ground around which they spent the evening twilight in telling yarns of frontier life while their unyoked oxen were grazing around them. Such an encampment went by the name of a Hoosier Tavern. The journey cost them nothing but the bare provisions they ate on the way which, however, was not estimated as they came from their own larders at home. As I walked up to one of these campfires the circle was opened and I was invited to a seat upon an ox yoke. I found my entertainers from the neighborhood of Terre Haute.

#### CHICAGO'S FIRST LAWSUIT

At that time Giles Spring and myself were the only practicing lawyers in Chicago and we had to live principally upon hope, for the population was too scant and commerce too small to occupy much of the time or afford a decent support for two young lawyers just commencing professional life. One morning after breakfast, having no office to go to, I went over to South Water street, to see what



new faces would show themselves. Presently a rather short, stout young man stepped up to me and inquired if I was a lawyer. This inquiry went through me like an electric shock, but I composed myself instantly, and answered him that I was, and inquired if I could be of any service to him. He replied that some one had stolen from him \$46 of Bel-lows Falls money, and he wanted my assistance to catch the thief and recover the property.

As I had no office to which I could take my client for a private consultation, I led the way across the street to the bank of the river, where we seated ourselves. Then he informed me that he had slept the night before at Wattles' tavern in a room with another young man, a stranger, and when he awoke in the morning, his roommate and his money were gone. After minute inquiry I was satisfied that his roommate was the thief.

We repaired to the office of Russel E. Heacock, a justice of the peace, which was in his log carpenter's shop near the junction of a slough and the river at the north end of State Street. Squire Heacock was really a very good lawyer and well informed man with good natural abilities and withal as clever, upright and conscientious a man as one will often find. He must have been then over fifty years of age, and had resided many years in southern Illinois, where he had practiced his profession quite creditably and had not very long since, cast his fortunes here, and been elected justice of the peace, but did not offer himself as a practicing lawyer having for some reason become disgusted with the profession and had even taken the judicial office reluctantly. He preferred to work at his trade in a small way which was that of a carpenter, and hence his old associates on the southern circuits, who were fond of significant cognomens called him "Bench Legs" and by this third name was he called by some of less worth and less intelligence than he possessed. I well remember some two years after this some



special reason induced him to go into the circuit court and try a cause where I was on the opposite side. I was foolish enough to say what I then supposed were some smart things at his expense about fossil law and fossil lawyers, for which I received a castigation at his tongue, which I well merited and by which I have profited ever since.

Soon a written complaint was made and a warrant issued for the arrest of the suspected party and placed in the hands of James H. Reed who so far as I now remember was the only constable or deputy sheriff in Chicago. Mr. Forbes, the sheriff of Cook County then resided and had his office on the DesPlaines River twelve miles from town. After an active day's search in which we all engaged our man was caught after dark and brought to the carpenter's shop, followed by a goodly number of curious spectators for the apprehension of a thief was really an event in Chicago.

My man stood convicted in the presence of the court and the crowd. I speak of moral conviction for still legal forms were required and as it was late formal examination was postponed, and the constable was required to keep the prisoner safely in the meantime. As there was no jail in the county, Mr. Reed took his prisoner to his cabinet shop, where he ordered him to lie down on a pile of shavings under the work bench, when he secured the doors and windows and seated himself to watch the night through.

Here was a sensation in Chicago. As his case looked hard the prisoner induced Col. Hamilton to aid Giles Spring in his defense. The latter had practised law in southern Illinois and was a very good lawyer and a fine speaker full of genial wit and anecdotes. It was the last time he ever appeared in any court to represent a client. At the appointed hour in the morning we all appeared in the log shop of the justice with a large part of the town at our heels. The first move for the defense was to take a change of venue from Justice Heacock to Justice Harmon.



## CHICAGO IN 1833 AND 1834

Justice Isaac Harmon did most of the justice business in Chicago for the succeeding two years without pretending to any special knowledge of the law. He was an excellent upright man of good common sense, mild in his habits and disposition and withal a very good officer. He kept his office in a log house in which he also lived with his excellent family situated near the old tannery in the angle formed by the North Branch and the Chicago River. We all ferried the river in canoes at Dearborn street, and took our way up the river bank to the new seat of justice.

The forenoon was consumed in stately preparations and as but few could be accommodated in the little room which had hitherto served for the administration of the little justice required in the future commercial metropolis of the northwest and as everybody seemed anxious to hear the new lawyers and as we were quite as anxious that everybody should hear us, it was determined not to commence till after dinner, and that the examination should take place at Wattles' Tavern on the Point. There was at that time an old frame bridge across the north branch between Lake and Randolph streets, which served us to go to the tavern.

Directly after dinner the court was opened in due form and the examination commenced on the porch of the old tavern. The audience was really exhilarating. Not only most of the men in town, there were no boys there then, but many of the ladies were there also.

The peculiarity of Spring's manner was clearly manifested in this first of our encounters. There was a fierce positiveness in every look and action and word which would persuade all who saw and heard him that he believed all he said no matter how absurd it really might be. His keen eye flashed fire, his brow contracted and his large mouth pinched up between every sentence while his ideas so outran his tongue that he never pronounced a complete sentence but he tore along like a fractious team before a



plough in rough and stony ground, sometimes throwing a sod as high as one's head and at other times the plow bounding itself fully as high, yet always dashing on in the right course and withal cultivating the ground thoroughly.

His positions were always ingenious and his theories as plausible as the circumstances would possibly admit. The Chicago Bar has had few more vigorous intellects than that of Giles Spring.

### GRAND PRAIRIE

In Chicago I first saw the grand prairie of Illinois, the largest east of the Mississippi River. In truth it covers the whole of Illinois north of Centralia, interspersed by detached groves and belts of timber along the margins of the streams, which are as dots and threads as compared with the great expanse of prairie through which they are scattered. It is as much one prairie as would a lake of the same extent and with islands in it corresponding to these timber spots, be one body of water.

At Chicago alone does the Grand Prairie actually abut upon Lake Michigan for the distance of four miles between Oak Woods now Hyde Park and the mouth of the Chicago River. Here alone do the waters of the lake actually lave the head of this great prairie. Everywhere else are these two great bodies of land and water separated by bodies of timber of greater or less width along the shores of the lake. The traveler could then and may still ride from the woody regions of Egypt to the waters of the lake not indeed being out of sight of timber all or even the greater portion of the time, but without passing near timber enough for a walking stick or even a riding whip. Sometimes, indeed and often he would be surrounded by the prairie as if by the waters of the sea where the sky would meet the land all around him, the line of meeting unbroken by a single hill or tree,



the rolling surface no more uneven than the swelling ocean in the calm which succeeds the storm.

At other times he would be surrounded by islands of woods and hills of timber of greater or less extent but nowhere cutting off or separating this magnificent prairie, whose soil is as rich and fertile as one could wish overgrown by rich grasses peculiar to themselves. Over all this great rich prairie not one settler's cabin could be found save only along the borders of the timber. The frontier man did not then believe that the prairies would ever be settled beyond one tier of farms around the groves. The rest it was supposed would ever remain an open range for stock which would make it the grazers' paradise. This was the subject of frequent conversation with those early settlers and such was the universal sentiment expressed by them. Little did they dream how soon that broad range was to be contracted and growing grain should take the place of the prairie grasses.

July, 1833, was one of the wettest months I ever knew in Northern Illinois. The whole country seemed literally flooded with water. The prairies were then uncultivated and were covered, especially the low and flat lands, with tall rank grass which impeded the escape or the evaporation of the water which stamped the whole country, especially in the neighborhood of Chicago with the character of a swamp or marsh. Those who have only seen it since it has been subdued by the husbandman whose labors have established a system of drainage by which the waters which fall upon it are enabled rapidly to escape, and the heat of the sun is freely admitted to the surface of the soil and does its part by evaporation to dry it, can form little conception of the appearance of the country at that day after it had been deluged with heavy rains.

My friend John Hathaway, who came to Chicago with me, and had hung out his shingle as a surveyor, although



he had never set a compass in his life, had been employed to locate and survey a reservation on Thorn Creek. Having done some surveying as a boy in New York I went along and supplied the necessary technical information. Our party consisted of Billy Caldwell, head chief of the Pottawatomies, Young Kinzie, later Col. Robert A. Kinzie, paymaster U.S. Army; Pat Mitch, then of Hard Scrabble, to keep camp and cook.

While I lay sick at the house of my friend, Irad Hill, in December, 1833, the town was thrown into a great commotion by a report that someone had seen a bear cross the prairie from the Oak Woods to the South Branch timber, which extended all along the east bank of the river as far north as Madison or Randolph streets, and a little way up nearly as far east as Clark street. The hunter's dogs and guns of the town were soon astir and the wood surrounded when the dogs were turned into the thick brush to hunt up the game. At last the motley pack gave tongue as near as I could understand near where the Rock Island Passenger Depot now stands and there on a good sized cottonwood tree bruin was found perched as he no doubt thought secure from his enemies. However, he was soon brought to grief and cut up into small pieces that all in the town who were fond of bear meat might have a taste. I could not forgive that bear for not having delayed his visit for a few weeks that I might have participated in the last bear hunt within the city limits of Chicago.

When I left for the South in October, Dr. Temple was about to put up an office on Hogan's triangular block fronting Water street above Wells. It was to consist of two small rooms below and an attic reached from the rear room. The rear room and the attic I engaged for an office and sleeping room. This was the first lawyer's office ever opened in Chicago. Till then no room for the purpose could be found in town.



## CHICAGO IN 1833 AND 1834

### CHICAGO'S FIRST GRAND BALL

In the meantime the upper floor of the new Mansion House had been laid and the windows put in and thus was provided for the first time in Chicago a room of sufficient size to accommodate a pretty large dancing party and in order to utilize it, it was resolved to have a grand ball. There were gentlemen enough, no doubt, but they alone would make a dry ball. Ladies in Chicago were very scarce and in order to make up the deficiency as far as possible every servant girl in town was invited. The streets happened to be very muddy, which was always the case in wet weather. I never saw worse roads than Chicago afforded when the unimproved prairie was used. After a few hot days of spring I have seen a dried crust over the semi-fluid of which the streets were composed to a great depth over which one could walk but which would vibrate and tremble for yards around. I once noticed four yoke of oxen with an empty wagon stalled at the corner of Wells and Lake streets.

At the time of the first ball in Chicago houses were scattered here and there in apparent confusion and the transit from one to another was made across the prairie and the travel was confined to no particular line so that a passage was practicable in the worst of weather.

Then Chicago had *no carriages* as the term is ordinarily understood. The ordinary lumber wagon, was better adapted to the purpose of transporting passengers and so it was when the weather was bad and the roads deep and mirey for some years later. Even as late as 1837 the most convenient and the most common vehicle in which the ladies made their calls was a one-horse cart in the bottom of which was a thick course of prairie hay, over which was a buffalo robe on which the ladies seated themselves with another robe over their laps. In this way they went in a jolly mood on



their round of calls or to attend a party or a wedding. The driver was seated on a front corner of the box as we now see him with a load of gravel instead of a bevy of ladies. Nothing could be more convenient than this arrangement for when the cart was backed up to the front door the ladies could get in or alight with the greatest convenience and laugh at the sea of mud around them. Mrs. John H. Kinzie was the first to introduce in Chicago this style of carriage but it soon became very popular and fashionable and so continued so long as the condition of the streets required them.

At the time of the ball, however, carts were unknown in Chicago, and the heavy lumber wagon monopolized the passenger transportation. In this way were the ladies gathered up and brought to the Mansion House, mistresses and maids seated side by side, all in their gayest rigs. In this way a sufficient number of the sex gathered to make out a sufficient number of sets to fill the hall. Perhaps never before or since were such contrasts in costume met and without apparently attracting the least attention. The richest silks, satins, and laces were observed in the same set with the simple calico which cost but a dime a yard. Officers from the garrison appeared in full dress covered with epaulettes, gold lace cords and tassels, and were often seen dancing with some pretty servant girl dressed in the plainest and cheapest manner. I recollect particularly the gorgeous appearance of Dr. Maxwell, the surgeon, and Lunt Thompson who thirty years later, fought so gallantly at Donelson, and who shortly after died of sickness below Shiloh. The Dr. was a man of fine appearance and portly proportions upon whom the gay military costume was peculiarly becoming. He was especially merry at the ball and affected a flow of wit and good humor. With all he was a man of worth as well as a choice companion. He was a good citizen and a kind husband, though I am sorry



## CHICAGO IN 1833 AND 1834

I cannot speak of him as a father for I never heard that he had an opportunity of manifesting his qualities in that relation. Had he had an opportunity no doubt he would have challenged admiration as a father.

At the time of which I am now speaking, the winter of '33-'34, the prairie wolves were very abundant. I have often met them in the streets of Chicago evidently hunting for food. I recollect one night when coming to my office late I observed several right in front of it. They did not scamper away as if they cared much for me, but dropped their tails, if possible to a still lower position than usual and slowly trailed, some taking to the ice on the river and others following up the street towards the Point but all looked back at me over their shoulders as is their way when moving away from any object which they do not care to become intimate with.

Dr. Temple had taken a contract from the government to carry the mail from Chicago to St. Louis in four horse post coaches. The service was to commence on the first of January, 1834. It was a wild country still from Chicago to Ottawa and neither he or any of his servants had been over the road nor was it easy to find one in Chicago that had that was willing to go along and show him the road. As I had been over the road once he requested me to go along and act as pilot. To this I consented and thus I became the conductor of the *first post coach* south and west of Chicago.

In February, 1834, a thaw came and the river broke with a great rush of waters. In the morning the ice was going out with a great exhibition of force. I hastened to the pier which had been extended across the bed of the river at the Fort and found the waters were beginning to cut a way across the sandpit straight out into the lake. The loose sand wore away and the channel increased rapidly and in a few hours was large enough to pass a schooner. It was quite an attraction through the day. I think that channel



was again closed up in a short time after the waters subsided, but was again opened in the spring by another rise in the water and it has never since been closed.

It was early in that spring of 1834 that I found myself standing at the crossing of Dearborn and Lake streets looking west; and for the first time I could see where the street was by the line of buildings on either side of it. This was the first time I ever noticed a street in Chicago made perceptible by the buildings on both sides of it. Then for the first time could I fully realize that our little settlement was assuming the appearance of a town. It is not easy to realize that now there are more than a quarter of a million people. In what we call the West in America has the world ever seen such rapid growths of populations and improvements?



# THE INDIAN BOUNDARY LINE UNDER THE TREATY OF AUGUST 24, 1816

*By*

*CHARLES G. DAVIS*

Beginning in La Salle County, at a point on the Fox River, about seventeen miles above its mouth, and thence running west through the northern parts of La Salle, Bureau, Henry and Rock Island counties to the Mississippi River, there appears on maps, plats and surveys, a line designated as "The Indian Boundary Line" and "The Old Indian Boundary Line."

This line was established pursuant to the Indian Treaty of August 24, 1816, as will be herein related. Tracts of land through which the line runs were granted by U. S. patents and subsequently described, as being south or north of this line. The lands south were surveyed in 1821, the lands north in 1833 and 1842. This was for the reason that title to the territory north of the line remained in the Indians under the said treaty until its cession to the United States by treaties of 1828 and 1829, as will hereinafter appear. As the north and south lines of the above surveys frequently failed to close on the Boundary Line at the same point, offsets, or jogs, occur in north and south highways and sectional lines where they touch the Line. To better understand the reasons why the Line was so located, it is necessary to refer to the Ordinance of 1787 and the establishment of Illinois Territory.

As is well known, the territory now included within the State of Illinois was part of the territory of the United States



northwest of the Ohio River, called the "North West Territory," ceded to the United States by Virginia in 1784, by Massachusetts in 1785 and by Connecticut in 1786, the cessions by the last two states being of tracts less than 2° in width.

Article V of the Ordinance of 1787, adopted by Congress for the government of the Northwest Territory, provided that there should be formed in said territory, not less than three nor more than five states, and fixed and established the boundaries of the "western," "middle" and "eastern" states (Illinois, Indiana and Ohio), which were to include the whole territory and were to be bounded on the north by the British possessions. The western state (Illinois) was to be bounded "by the Mississippi, the Ohio and Wabash rivers; a direct line drawn from the Wabash and Post Vincents (Vincennes) due north to the territorial line between the United States and Canada; and by the said territorial line to the Lake of the Woods and Mississippi."

Article V further provided:

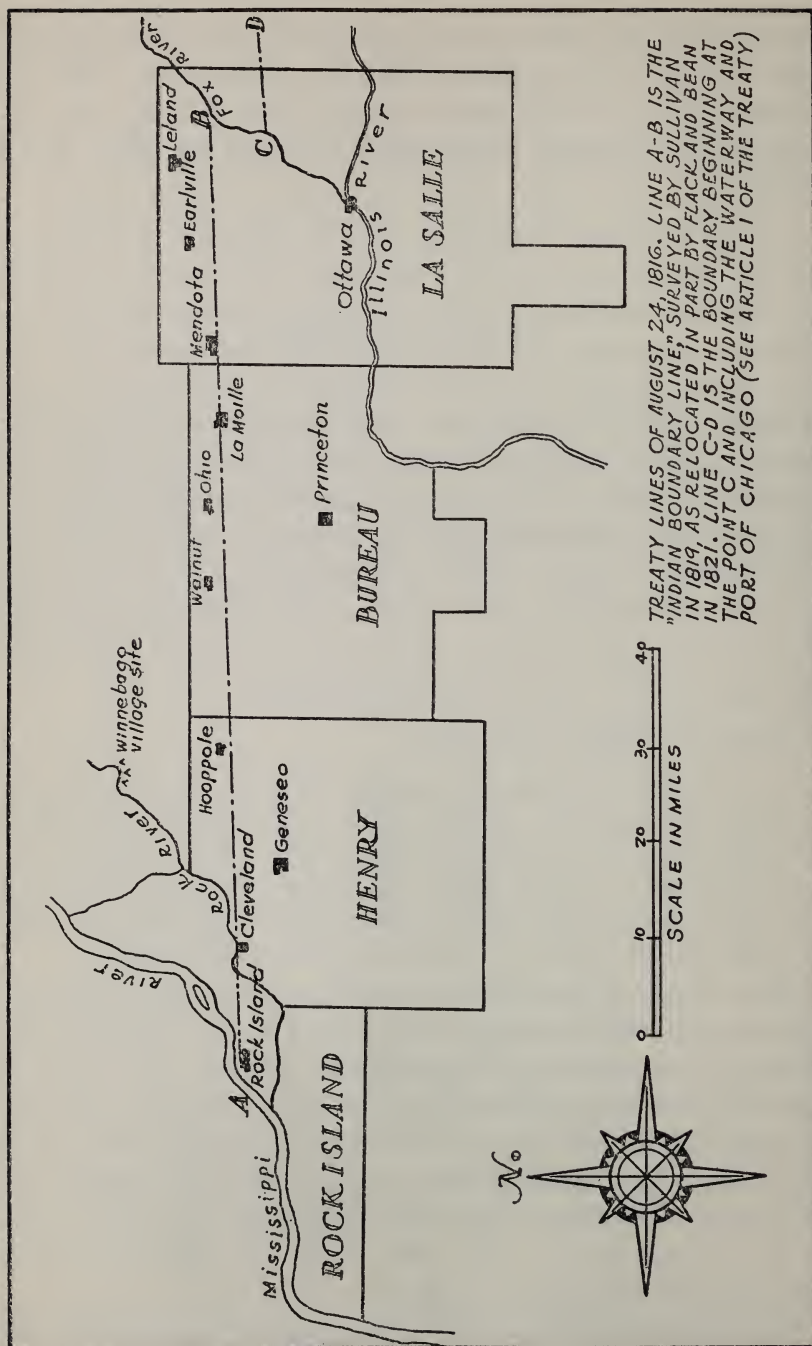
That the boundaries of these three states shall be subject so far to be altered, that if Congress shall hereafter find it expedient, they shall have authority to form one or two states in that part of the said territory which lies north of an east and west line drawn through the southerly bend or extreme of Lake Michigan.

The foregoing boundaries have been described in detail in that the north boundary of the future State of Illinois was generally supposed to be fixed by said Article V as "an east and west line drawn through the southerly bend or extreme of Lake Michigan" and as that was doubtless the reason why such a line was adopted in the Treaty of August 24, 1816, as the boundary south of which the lands were ceded to the United States. This line, however, was never surveyed as a boundary of a state.

How the northern boundary was raised to parallel 42° 30'



# THE INDIAN BOUNDARY LINE





north latitude by the proposals and efforts of Nathaniel Pope, territorial delegate of Illinois in Congress, when the territory was to be admitted to statehood in 1818; how the later State of Wisconsin laid claim to the northern part of the State of Illinois south to the east and west line drawn through the southerly bend of Lake Michigan; is a most interesting story in itself.

Illinois Territory was established by Act of Congress, approved February 3, 1809, and included "from and after the first day of March next, all that part of the Indiana Territory which lies west of the Wabash River and a direct line drawn from the said Wabash River and Post Vincennes due north, to the territorial line between the United States and Canada." The boundaries as then defined were unchanged until its admission as a state in 1818.

This was a vast domain with only a few thousand white inhabitants, mostly found in scattered settlements in the very southern part of present Illinois. Except for these settlements, the territory was in a state of nature, occupied by the Indian nations who claimed various parts thereof. These nations were at times at war with each other and with the whites. It was not until the close of the Black Hawk War in 1832 that the Indians ceased to be a menace.

It was over this great, untamed territory that Ninian Edwards was appointed Governor on April 24, 1809, and served as such until Illinois became a state. Governor Edwards, who was the principal figure in the events under discussion, was born in Maryland and brought up in Kentucky where he became attorney general at an early age. At the age of twenty-eight, he was appointed Chief Justice of the High Court of Appeals of Kentucky, which office he held when appointed Territorial Governor. He was United States Senator from Illinois from 1818 to 1824, and, while in the Senate, was appointed Minister to Mexico. He was Governor of Illinois from 1826 to 1830. He was described



## THE INDIAN BOUNDARY LINE

by Governor Thomas Ford, a contemporary, in his *History of Illinois*, as "a large well made man, with a noble, princely appearance," and, as a Senator, "he showed an extensive knowledge of public affairs and became distinguished as a man of fine talents throughout the Union."

During the War of 1812, Governor Edwards organized a successful campaign against the Indians on the Illinois and, as Governor of the state, he quickly ended the Winnebago War of 1827. The Indian question remained troublesome during his entire rule and by the treaties hereinafter described, he sought to remove this danger constantly threatening the settler and the traveler on the trails.

By a treaty made at St. Louis on November 3, 1804, between William Henry Harrison, Governor of Indiana Territory, as commissioner of the United States, and the chiefs and head men of the united Sac and Fox tribes, these tribes ceded to the United States certain territory lying east of the Mississippi and beginning at the mouth of the Wisconsin being described as follows: ". . . up the same (the Wisconsin) to a point which shall be 36 miles in a direct line from the mouth of said river, thence by a direct line to the point where the Fox river leaves the small Lake called Sakaegan; thence, down the Fox River to the Illinois River, and down the same to the Mississippi." This cession is roughly the territory between the mouths of the Illinois and Wisconsin rivers, bounded on the west by the Mississippi and on the east by the Illinois and Fox rivers.

The Treaty of 1804 was reaffirmed by a treaty at Portage des Sioux, September 13, 1815, between General William Clark, Governor Ninian Edwards and Colonel Auguste Chouteau, as commissioners, and the Sac nation, and by a further treaty between the same parties at St. Louis on May 13, 1816.

The ownership by various Indian nations of lands in the Illinois Territory became a question of dispute not long after



the Treaty of 1804, not only between the United States and the nations, but also between the nations.

This led to treaties made in an attempt to determine the rights of the parties and to settle the differences and obtain peace between the United States and the nations and between the nations themselves. The principal nations affected were the Sauk, Foxes, Chippewa, Ottawa, Potawatomi, Winnebago, Sioux, Menominee and other northern Indians.

The title of the Sauk and Foxes to the lands ceded by them in the Treaty of 1804 was particularly disputed by the Ottawa, Chippewa and Potawatomi, then somewhat inaccurately described as "Indians of the Illinois River." To settle this dispute (and thereby to raise a later dispute with the Winnebago), the treaty which established the Indian Boundary Line, the subject of this article, was made.

Following the War of 1812, the Indians, particularly on the upper Illinois River, maintained an attitude of veiled hostility. The Governor, seeking to provide for the future removal of the Indians to the north of the line then considered to become the north boundary of the State of Illinois when admitted, and to acquire the title of the Indian nations to lands of the future state, by direction of the government, concluded the Treaty of August 24, 1816, which follows:

TREATY OF PEACE, FRIENDSHIP AND LIMITS, made and concluded between William Clark, Ninian Edwards and Auguste Chouteau, commissioners plenipotentiary of the United States of America, on the part and behalf of the said states, of the one part, and the chiefs and warriors of the united tribes of Ottawas, Chippewas and Potawatomis, residing on the Illinois and Melwaukee rivers, and their waters, and on the southwestern parts of Lake Michigan, of the other part.

Whereas, a serious dispute has for some time past existed between the contracting parties relative to the right to a part of the lands ceded to the United States



## THE INDIAN BOUNDARY LINE

by the tribes of Sacs and Foxes on the third day of November, one thousand eight hundred and four, and both parties being desirous of preserving a harmonious and friendly intercourse, and of establishing permanent peace and friendship, have for the purpose of removing all difficulties, agreed to the following terms:

Art. 1. The said chiefs and warriors, for themselves and the tribes they represent, agree to relinquish, and hereby do relinquish, to the United States, all their right, claim, and title to all the land contained in the before mentioned cession of the Sacs and Foxes, which lies south of a due west line from the southern extremity of Lake Michigan to the Mississippi river. And they moreover cede to the United States all the land contained within the following bounds, to-wit: beginning on the left bank of the Fox river of Illinois, ten miles above the mouth of said Fox river; thence running so as to cross Sandy Creek, ten miles above its mouth; thence, in a direct line, to a point ten miles north of the west end of the Portage between Chicago Creek, which empties into Lake Michigan, and the river Depleines, a fork of the Illinois; thence in a direct line, to a point on Lake Michigan, ten miles northward of the mouth of Chicago Creek; thence along the lake, to a point ten miles southward of the mouth of the said Chicago Creek; thence in a direct line, to a point on the Kankakee, ten miles above its mouth; thence with the said Kankakee and the Illinois river, to the mouth of Fox river, and thence to the beginning: Provided, nevertheless, that the said tribes shall be permitted to hunt and to fish within the limits of the land hereby relinquished and ceded so long as it may continue to be the property of the United States.

Art. 2. In consideration of the aforesaid relinquishment and cession, the United States have this day delivered to said tribes a considerable quantity of merchandize, and do agree to pay them, annually, for the term of twelve years, goods to the value of one thousand dollars, reckoning that value at the first cost of the goods in the city or place in which they shall be pur-



chased, without any charge for transportation; which said goods shall be delivered to the said tribes at some place on the Illinois river, not lower down than Peoria. And the said United States do moreover agree to relinquish to the said tribes all the land contained in the aforesaid cession of the Sacs and Foxes, which lies north of a due west line, from the southern extremity of Lake Michigan to the Mississippi river, except three leagues square at the mouth of the Ouisconsin river, including both banks, and such other tracts, on or near to the Ouisconsin and Mississippi rivers, as the president of the United States may think proper to reserve: Provided that such other tracts shall not in the whole exceed the quantity that would be contained in five leagues square.

Art. 3. The contracting parties, that peace and friendship may be permanent, promise that in all things whatever, they will act with justice and correctness towards each other, and that they will, with perfect good faith, fulfill all the obligations imposed upon them by former treaties.

In witness whereof, the said Ninian Edwards, William Clark and Auguste Chouteau, commissioners aforesaid, and the chiefs and warriors of the aforesaid tribes, have hereunto subscribed their names and affixed their seals, this twenty-fourth day of August, one thousand eight hundred and sixteen, and of the Independence of the United States the forty-first.

Ninian Edwards,  
Wm. Clark,  
Auguste Chouteau.

Mucketeypokee or Black Partridge,  
Sannowchewone, by his brother, Ignations,  
Mucketepenneseec, or Black Bird,  
Bendegakewa,  
Pemasau, or Walker,  
Ontawa,  
Nangesay, alias Stout,  
Chamblee,



## THE INDIAN BOUNDARY LINE

Cocake,  
Shawanoë,  
Wapunsy,  
Cunnepepy,  
Wonesee,  
Richeikeming, or Lake,  
Cabenaw,  
Opaho,  
Cowwesaut,  
Chekinaka,  
Macheweskeaway,  
Shanquissee,  
Ignatius,  
Takaoneneë,  
Ottawonce,  
Towwaning, or Trader,  
Cashshakee,  
Nigigwash,  
Sheshebungge,  
Mowais, or Little Wolf.

Done at St. Louis, in the presence of R. Wash, Secretary to the Commission, R. Graham, Indian agent for the Territory of Illinois, Thomas Forsyth, Indian agent, J. Maul, lieutenant 8th regiment of Infantry, P. Provenchère, interpreter of the commissioners, Maurice Blondeaux, Indian agent, John Ruland, M. Lewis Clark, Sam Solomon, interpreter and translator, Jacques Mette, interpreter, Katasa, (a Kickapoo chief) Tapema, do. Sakappee, do. Kenapeso, do. Pawanqua, do—Ancowa, do. Mackkattaoushiek, do. Shaquabee, do. Quashquammer, a Sac Chief, Mecitch, do. Capitot, a Fox Chief, Acoqua or Kettle, the principal war chief of Foxes.

To the Indian names are subjoined a mark and a seal.

The eighth signatory of the chiefs, is "Chamblee," more generally known as "Shabonee," or "Shabbona." Born at Ottawa, he married into and became a chief of the Potawatomi. He was one of the leaders with Tecumseh but, after the defeat on the Thames, became a steadfast friend of the white man. Because of his ride in warning and saving



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settlers at the beginning of the Black Hawk War, he was known as "The Paul Revere of the Indians." "Shabbona State Park" in La Salle County is named for him, and townships and groves bear his name in Henry, Bureau, La Salle and DeKalb counties where he had lived.

By the above treaty the United States not only acquired the lands south of the then fixed north boundary of the future State of Illinois, but also the area within which were Fort Dearborn, Chicago harbor and the water route between Lake Michigan and the Illinois River.

This cession of a tract that included the Chicago and Des Plaines rivers and the portage between them, was the first acquisition of lands for the avowed purpose of the construction of a canal to join the waters of Lake Michigan and the Illinois.

With a portage of scarcely a mile from the Lake to the southerly flow of the "Rivière Devine," as the DesPlaines was named on Jolliet's map, this waterway into the south had been in common use by explorers, voyageurs and traders since its first passage by Père Marquette and Jolliet in 1673, and before this time, by the savage races who had occupied these lands in the far distant past.

The importance and necessity of water-borne communication in the early part of the nineteenth century and the absence of difficulties of construction of a canal to the Illinois, had at this time (1816) given a definite purpose for building the later Illinois & Michigan Canal. As early as 1821, the Illinois legislature appropriated \$10,000 for a survey of the route of this canal.

Some years after the treaty, Governor Edwards in remonstrating because the Indians were not receiving all the benefits to be given them therein, stated in writing that the tribes were induced to cede the lands which included the portage by having represented to them during the negotiations, that



## THE INDIAN BOUNDARY LINE

the construction of a canal as proposed would particularly be "advantageous" to the tribes.

In this treaty was the actual beginning of a plan that is today reaching its greater fulfillment in the completion of the great waterway from the Lakes to the Gulf.

The cession of the territory north of the line by the United States to the three nations led to disputes by other Indian nations who claimed ownership of parts thereof. Future cessions of lands north of the line, by various tribes and nations, related to the line of 1816, as will later appear.

The next year, the Governor received the following letter from the Secretary of War directing the survey of the treaty lines:

Department of War, Nov. 1, 1817.

Sir:

Your letter of the 7th ult. recommending the appointment of B. Stephenson Esq. as a Major General of the militia of the Illinois territory, has been received, and will be duly attended to, when the Senate is in session.

You will receive, by this mail a commission to treat with the Indians claiming the lands lying between those ceded by the Kaskaskias in 1803, and the Illinois river.

As it is not only desirable but indispensably necessary that the boundary lines of all the lands ceded by the Indians should be established and well marked, the President has appointed Richard Graham, Indian Agent, and ——— Phillips to act as commissioners, for the purpose of running and marking, in conjunction with two chiefs to be appointed by the Indians, such boundary lines of the lands ceded by the Indians within the Illinois Territory as you may deem necessary. The lines will be run at the expense of the United States, and the two chiefs who may be designated to attend the commissioners will receive a compensation not less than that of the commissioners.

I would recommend that a contract be made with the principal surveyor, Mr. Rector, for running and marking the lines at a given sum per mile—the surveyors furnishing everything necessary for that purpose. As a



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specific appropriation will be asked for this object, I will thank you to advise this department, at as early a period as convenient, what would be the probable expense of running and marking the lines, independent of the expense and compensation to the commissioners.

It is very desirable to have the boundary of that tract of land ceded by the treaty of August, 1816, and lying between the Illinois river and Lake Michigan, established and a particular report made of the quality. If that tract of land was surveyed and settled, it would very much facilitate the migrations to the Illinois Territory from New England and the State of New York by means of the lake navigation.

I have the honor to be with great respect your obedient servant.

GEORGE GRAHAM,  
Acting Sec'y War.

To GOV. N. EDWARDS,  
Kaskaskia, Illinois.

A search made of the survey records in the General Land Office did not disclose any mention of the two chiefs to be appointed by the Indians in conjunction with the surveys, as directed in the foregoing letter.

A letter from the Commissioner, General Land Office, Department of the Interior, dated March 17, 1934, in response to inquiries by the author, states the facts so succinctly that it is quoted in part below. The townships and ranges are all in Henry County, in which respect inquiry was particularly made.

Our records show that a line from the south end of Lake Michigan to the Mississippi River was surveyed by John C. Sullivan in 1819. According to the field notes of this survey on file in this office, the line from the south end of Lake Michigan to the Fox River was not marked but was for the purpose of ascertaining a point of beginning on the said Fox River. From the Fox River westerly to the Mississippi River, the line was actually marked on the ground. It appears that



## THE INDIAN BOUNDARY LINE

this line was surveyed for the purpose of marking the south boundary of the lands ceded to the Ottawa, Chipewewa and Potawatomi Indians by the act of August 24, 1816.

It appears that when the public land surveys were extended over northern Illinois, the line as surveyed by John C. Sullivan in 1819 could not, at least in certain instances, be identified. On plat of T. 18 N., R 2 E., 4th P.M., part south of the Indian boundary line, it is stated :

"The North boundary designated 'old Indian boundary line' was surveyed by Abner Flack and Jonathan L. Bean, in the 3rd quarter of 1821, whilst executing the contract of Stephen Rector and Thomas C. Rector of the 20th of March, 1821, which includes the survey of this fractional township, in consequence of not being able to close the public surveys to the said Indian boundary, as originally surveyed by John C. Sullivan, assisted by James M. Duncan in the 1st quarter of 1819, under the authority of a letter of appointment from William Rector, Surveyor of the lands of the United States in Illinois and Missouri, dated October 18, 1818, authorizing them to survey certain Indian boundaries under the direction of Commissioners Graham and Philips appointed by the President of the United States to run out the lines of the tract ceded by the treaty of Saint Louis of the 24th of August, 1816—This being the line agreed to be run due west from the Southern extremity of Lake Michigan to the Mississippi—(page 177 land laws, edition of 1828)—The survey by Sullivan and Duncan is therefore abandoned as a boundary to the public surveys, and the line of Bean and Flack adopted in lieu thereof . . ."

On the plat of T. 18 N., R. 2 E., 4th P.M. part of township north of the Indian boundary line, it is stated that Bean and Flack resurveyed 50 miles 14.81 chains of the line established by Sullivan in 1819. It is therefore apparent that the original line as surveyed by Sullivan was not adopted, in all instances, as the line



upon which the public land surveys were closed. The statement regarding the adoption of the Bean and Flack line appears upon the official plats of Ts. 18 N., Rs. 2, 3, 4, and 5 E., 4th P.M.

Our records indicate that the portions of Ts. 18 N., Rs. 2, 3, 4 and 5 E., 4th P.M., in Henry County, south of the Indian boundary line, were surveyed in 1821 by Flack and Bean under contract dated March 20, 1821.

In response to further inquiry by the author, the Commissioner, in a letter dated January 2, 1935, stated that there are statements on many of the plats similar to those given above. These plats also give the names of the men who executed the surveys, the dates the surveys were executed, as well as information pertaining to the Indian Boundary Line.

Acting as a mediator to suspend the constant internecine wars of the Indians and settle their quarrels over ownership and right of occupancy of various lands, William Clark and Lewis Cass, as Commissioners of the United States, negotiated the Treaty of August 19, 1825, at Prairie du Chien, of which Articles 7 and 9 are as follows:

Art. 7. It is agreed between the Winnebagoes and the Sioux, Sacs and Foxes and Ottawas, Chippewas and Potawatomes of the Illinois, that the Winnebago country shall be bounded as follows: southeasterly by Rock River from its source near the Winnebago lake to the Winnebago village, about forty miles above its mouth; westerly by the east line of the tract, lying upon the Mississippi herein secured to the Ottawa, Chippewa and Potawatome Indians, of the Illinois; and also by the high bluff, described in the Sioux boundary, and running north to Black River; from this point the Winnebagoes claim up Black River to a point due west from the source of the left fork of the Ouisconsin; thence to the source of the said fork, and down the same to the Ouisconsin; thence down the Ouisconsin to the portage and across the portage to Fox river; thence down Fox river to the Winnebago Lake and to the grand Kan Kanlin, including in their claim the whole



## THE INDIAN BOUNDARY LINE

of Winnebago lake; but, for the causes stated in the next article, this line from Black river must for the present be left indeterminate.

Art. 9. The country secured to the Ottawa, Chippewa and Potawatomie tribes of the Illinois is bounded as follows: Beginning at the Winnebago village, on Rock river, forty miles from its mouth and running thence down the Rock river to a line which runs from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi, and with that line to the Mississippi, opposite to Rock Island; thence up that river to the United States reservation, at the mouth of the Ouisconsin; thence with the south and east lines of the said reservation to the Ouisconsin; thence southerly, passing the heads of the small streams emptying into the Mississippi, to the Rock river at the Winnebago village. The Illinois Indians have also a just claim to a portion of the country bounded south by the Indian boundary line aforesaid, running from the southern extreme of Lake Michigan, east by Lake Michigan, north by the Menominie country, and northwest by Rock river. This claim is recognized in the treaty concluded with the said Illinois tribes at St. Louis, August 24, 1816, but as the Millewakee and Manetoowalk bands are not represented at this council, it cannot be now definitely adjusted.

The Winnebago village mentioned in the treaty was located a short distance below the present site of the village of Prophetstown, Whiteside County. This village of Wabokieshiek, the Prophet, was destroyed May 10, 1832, at the beginning of the Black Hawk War, by the American force under General Atkinson, which included Captain Abraham Lincoln and his company of the 4th Regiment of Illinois Mounted Volunteers.

As the whites increased in number north of the Indian Boundary Line, in northern Illinois and what is now southern Wisconsin, particularly in the vicinity of the lead mines, cessions were obtained from the Indian nations of much of this territory.



Provisional boundaries were defined by the following treaty concluded at Green Bay, August 25, 1828, the preamble and Article 1 of which are as follows:

The Government of the United States having appointed Commissioners to treat with the Sac, Fox, Winnebago, Pottowatomie, Ottawa and Chippewa tribes of Indians, for the purpose of extinguishing their title to lands within the State of Illinois and the territory of Michigan, situated between the Illinois River and the lead mines on Fever River and in the vicinity of said lead mines and for other purposes; and it having been found impracticable in consequence of the lateness of the period when the instructions were issued, the extent of the country occupied by the Indians and their dispersed situation, to convene them in sufficient numbers to justify a cession of land on their part; and the Chiefs of the Winnebago tribe and of the united tribes of the Potawatomes, Chippewas and Ottawas, assembled at Green Bay, having declined at this time to make the desired cession, the following temporary arrangement, subject to the ratification of the President and Senate of the United States, has this day been made between Lewis Cass and Pierre Menard, Commissioners of the United States, and the said Winnebago tribe and the united tribes of Potawatomie, Chippewa and Ottawa Indians in order to remove the difficulties which have arisen in consequence of the occupation, by white persons, of that part of the mining country which has not been heretofore ceded to the United States.

Art. 1. It is agreed that the following shall be the provisional boundary between the lands of the United States and those of the said Indians: The Ouisconsin River from its mouth to its nearest approach to the Blue Mounds, thence southerly, passing east of the said mounds to the head of that branch of the Pocatolaka [Pecatonica.C.G.D.] creek which runs near the Spotted Arm's village; thence with the said branch to the main forks of Pocatolka creek, thence southeasterly to the ridge dividing the Winnebago country



## THE INDIAN BOUNDARY LINE

from that of the Potawatomi, Chippewa and Ottawa tribes, thence southerly with the said ridge to the line running from Chicago to the Mississippi, near Rock Island. And it is fully understood that the United States now freely occupy the country between these boundaries and the Mississippi River, until a treaty shall be held with the Indians for its cession; which treaty it is presumed will be held in the year 1829. . . . It is also agreed by the Indians that a ferry may be established over the Rock River where the Fort Clark road crosses the same, and, also a ferry over the same river at the crossing of the Lewiston road.

It is of interest to note the assent on part of the tribes to Rock River ferries. Fort Clark was located at present Peoria. In 1827, O. W. Kellogg opened a road, known as "Kellogg's Trail," from Ft. Clark to Galena, crossing Rock River at present Dixon. In 1828, John Dixon, the "Nachusa" of the Indians, securing a contract to carry the mail over this route, brought Joseph Ogee, a half-breed, to establish a ferry at this point. The operation of this ferry was taken over by John Dixon in 1830. While the author has no authentic information as to the "Lewiston road," he suggests that it was a road from Lewiston, Fulton County, which county was established January 28, 1823, to present Rock Island, and crossed the Rock River south of Rock Island.

The very important cession by the Chippewa, Ottawa and Potawatomi Indians was made by the treaty concluded at Prairie du Chien on July 29, 1829, which is in part as follows:

Articles of a Treaty made and concluded at Prairie du Chien, in the territory of Michigan between the United States of America, by their Commissioners, General John McNeil, Colonel Pierre Menard and Caleb Atwater, Esq., and the united nations of Chippewa, Ottawa and Pottawatomie Indians, of the waters of the Illinois, Milwaukee and Manitoouck rivers.



Art. 1. The aforesaid nations of Chippewa, Ottawa and Pottawatomie Indians, do hereby cede to the United States aforesaid all the lands comprehended within the following limits to-wit: Beginning at the Winnebago village, on Rock river, forty miles from its mouth and running thence down the Rock River, to a line which runs due west from the most southern bend of Lake Michigan to the Mississippi river, and with that line to the Mississippi river opposite to Rock Island; thence up that river to the United States reservation at the mouth of the Ouisconsin; thence with the south and east lines of said reservation to the Ouisconsin river; thence southerly, passing the heads of the small streams emptying into the Mississippi, to the Rock River aforesaid at the Winnebago village, the place of beginning. And also, one other tract of land, described as follows, to-wit: Beginning on the western shore of Lake Michigan at the northeast corner of the field of Antoine Ouilmette, who lives near Gross Pointe, about twelve miles north of Chicago; thence running due west, to the Rock River, aforesaid, thence down the said river, to where a line drawn due west from the most southern bend of Lake Michigan crosses said river; thence east along said line to the Fox river of the Illinois; thence along the northwestern boundary line of the cession of 1816 to Lake Michigan, thence northwardly along the western shore of said Lake to the place of beginning. . . .

Art. 3. From the cessions aforesaid, there shall be reserved for the use of the undernamed chiefs and their bands, the following tracts of land, viz.: For Wauponehsee, five sections of land at the Grand Bois on Fox River of the Illinois where Shaytee's village now stands. For Shab-eh-nay two sections at his village near the Paw Paw Grove. [This is Shabbona. C.G.D.] For Awn-kote, four sections at the village of Sau-meh-naug, on the Fox River of the Illinois.

Art. 4. There shall be granted by the United States to each of the following persons, (being descendants from Indians) the following tracts of land, viz.: To



## THE INDIAN BOUNDARY LINE

Claude Laframboise, one section of land on the Reviere aux Pleins, adjoining the line of the purchase of 1816. To Francois Bourbonne, Jr., one section at the Missionary establishment on the Fox River of the Illinois. To Alexander Robinson for himself and children, two sections on the Reviere aux Pleins above and adjoining the tract herein granted to Claude Laframboise. To Pierre Leclere [LeClaire.C.G.D.], one section at the village of the Assiminehkon or Paw Paw Grove. To Waish-ke-shaw, a Pottawatomie woman, wife of David Laughton and to her child, one half section at the old village of Nay-ou-Say, at or near the source of the Riviere aux Sables of the Illinois. To Billy Caldwell, two and a half sections on the Chicago River above and adjoining the line of the purchase of 1816. To Victoire Pothier, one half section on the Chicago River, above and adjoining the tract of land herein granted to Billy Caldwell. To Jane Miranda one quarter section on the Chicago river above and adjoining the tract herein granted to Victoire Pothier. To Madaline, a Pottawatomie woman, wife of Joseph Ogee, one section west of and adjoining the tract herein granted to Pierre LeClere, at the Paw Paw Grove. To Archangel Ouilmette, a Pottawatomie woman, wife of Antoine Ouilmette, two sections, for herself and her children, on Lake Michigan, south of and adjoining the northern boundary of the cession herein made by the Indians aforesaid to the United States. To Antoine and François LeClere [LeClaire.C.G.D.] one section each, lying on the Mississippi River, north of and adjoining the line drawn due west from the most southern bend of Lake Michigan where the said line strikes the Mississippi River. To Mo-ah-way one quarter section on the north side of and adjoining the tract herein granted to Waish-ke-shaw. The tracts of land herein stipulated to be granted shall never be leased or conveyed by the grantors [grantees.C.G.D.], or their heirs, to any persons whatever, without the permission of the President of the United States.



The grants in Articles 3 and 4 are of particular interest in those localities in which the names of some of the grantees are current today and have survived in villages, towns, sites, buildings, et cetera.

While the cession to the United States by the Winnebago nation, by the treaty concluded at Prairie du Chien on August 1, 1829, does not touch the Line, Article 1 defining the territory ceded is given below because of references therein and the interest that attaches thereto.

Art. 1. The said Winnebago nation hereby forever cede and relinquish to the said United States, all their right, title, and claim to the lands and country contained within the following limits and boundaries, to-wit: Beginning on Rock River at the mouth of the Pee-kee-tau-no or Pee-kee-tol-a-ka [Pecatonica], a branch thereof; thence up the Pee-kee-tol-a-ka to the mouth of Sugar Creek; thence up the said creek to the source of the eastern branch thereof; thence by a line running due north to the road leading from the eastern Blue Mound, by the most northern of the four lakes, to the portage of the Wisconsin and Fox rivers; thence along the said road to the crossing of Duck Creek; thence by a line running in a direct course to the most southeasterly bend of Lake Puck-a-way on Fox River; thence up said Lake and Fox River to the Portage of the Wisconsin; thence across said portage to the Wisconsin river; thence down said river to the eastern line of the United States reservation at the mouth of said river, on the south side thereof as described by the second article of the treaty made at St. Louis, on the twenty-fourth day of August, in the year eighteen hundred and sixteen, with the Chippewas, Ottawas and Potawatomes; thence with the lines of a tract of country on the Mississippi river (secured to the Chippewas, Ottawas and Potawatomes, of the Illinois, by the ninth article of the treaty made at Prairie du Chien on the nineteenth day of August, in the year eighteen hundred and twenty-five) running southwardly passing the heads of the small streams



## THE INDIAN BOUNDARY LINE

emptying into the Mississippi to the Rock river at the Winnebago village forty miles above its mouth; thence up Rock river to the mouth of the Pee-kee-tol-a-ka river the place of beginning.

In conclusion, it is to be noted that the first cession in Article 1 of the Treaty of 1816, was of all land ceded by the Sauk and Foxes (in the Treaty of 1804) which lies south of a due west line from the southern extremity of Lake Michigan to the Mississippi River; that is, of all land south of said line between the Fox and Illinois rivers on the east and the Mississippi River on the west. It is this line from the Fox to the Mississippi that is particularly the subject of this article. The author does not assume to have treated, other than generally, with that part of the cession appearing secondly in said Article 1 and beginning on the Fox River, ten miles above its mouth. The entire subject is open for further research on the part of others, both as to general and local history.

The Boundary Line running from the Fox to the Mississippi is one of the most important and prominent of those determined by treaties with the Indians. It is one of the few boundaries which became and remains a part of the description in conveyances of lands contiguous thereto. Many of the cessions after 1816 were in part based on this line or related thereto, as has appeared in the treaties given in this article. By following the limits of these later cessions, it will be seen, though sketchy in places, how the United States acquired the lands north of and contiguous to the line. The author has not used all the treaties in which cessions of lands in the territory have been made.

The great importance of the boundaries of the cession of the said Article 1 to include the port of Chicago and the future waterway have been considered.

The treaty itself merits study. It reveals statesmanship and far-seeing vision on the part of the commissioners who



negotiated the instrument. Unlike most Indian treaties, it was not a coerced "treaty of peace" following hostilities and requiring the vanquished to cede and evacuate territory. It was rather a negotiation concluded with fairness between parties then at peace.

The boundaries were predicated upon events then definitely in the making—the considered north line of the future State of Illinois, the lake port and the waterway to provide easy access to the future state by way of lake navigation.

The United States ceded the land north of the line (to which they had obtained title from the Sauk and Foxes in 1804) to the tribes, as the tribes ceded the land south of the line to the United States. The future canal was to benefit both parties. Governor Edwards upheld this view as has been made to appear.

The author but touches on this matter of treaties as they require in themselves much study and research not pertinent to the subject of this article.

The author expresses his appreciation for the aid in preparing this article, to Mr. Frank E. Stevens, member of the Historical Society and well known author on historical subjects. As the references are to well indexed volumes, the most important given below, footnotes were not used. The reader who may be interested in Chief Shabbona, is referred to a splendid story by Alta Porter Walters, which appeared in the Journal of the Society for October, 1924.

The treaties are found in Volume 7, *Public Statutes of the U. S., Treaties between the United States and the Indian Tribes*, edited by Richmond Peters, Boston, 1846; the Treaty of August 24, 1816, begins on page 146. The volume is in the State Library.

The Ordinance of 1787 appears in the earlier *Illinois Revised Statutes*. Discussion of Article V of the said Ordi-



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nance and references to Ninian Edwards are found in the *History of Illinois, from its commencement as a State in 1818 to 1847*, by Governor Thomas Ford, Chicago, 1854.

Various data are found in the *History of Illinois from 1779 to 1833; and Life and Times of Ninian Edwards*, by Ninian W. Edwards, 1870. The letter from the Secretary of War appears on page 545.

*The Black Hawk War*, by Frank E. Stevens, Chicago, 1903, is replete with facts preceding 1832.

Photolithographic copies of the plats with the statements thereon, may be obtained from the General Land Office at Washington, at 50 cents each. The original survey records, including the original plats, pertaining to Illinois, are filed with the State Auditor at Springfield and his records may contain documents of which the Land Office does not have copies.



## PORTRAITS OF HISTORIC SPOTS IN ILLINOIS

By

Lane K. Newberry

At the Illinois Day meeting of the Illinois State Historical Society, on December 3, 1935, Lane K. Newberry of Downers Grove spoke on the subject, "20,000 Miles in Illinois Painting Historic Spots." Mr. Newberry illustrated his talk with a number of canvases, and many more were on exhibit in the Illinois State Historical Library.

Although he has exhibited in Chicago on numerous occasions, the Illinois Day meeting was the first time Mr. Newberry's work has been shown downstate. Because of the marked attention his paintings attracted, we are happy to reproduce a number of them here, with the artist's own comments.

Editor.





### MANSION HOUSE — NAUVOO

This beautiful old home was erected in 1842, supposedly through a revelation to Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon Church. The Mormons first arrived in Nauvoo in 1839 and in less than six years it was a metropolis, with a population of more than 15,000. Here in 1841 they started the erection of the Mormon Temple, eighty-eight feet wide, a hundred twenty-eight feet long and sixty-five feet high. It was completed in 1846 at a cost of \$1,000,000. The exodus of the Mormons in 1846 left Nauvoo a dead city, with the exception of the brief period in which it was occupied by the French Icarians, a communistic settlement under the leadership of Etienne Cabet, French communist and reformer.





## THE BRIGHAM YOUNG HOME NAUVOO

Another of the old Mormon landmarks is this home which Brigham Young left behind when he led the exodus of the Mormons to the site of Salt Lake City. Brigham Young's last dictated entry in his office at Nauvoo reads thus, "Our homes, gardens, orchards, farms, streets, bridges, mills, public halls, magnificent temples and other public improvements we leave as a monument of our patriotism, industry, economy, uprightness of purpose and integrity of heart and as a living testimony of the falsehood and wickedness of those who charge us with idleness, dishonesty, disloyalty to the Constitution of our Country." A good part of the above monument still stands in this beautiful old city.





### WILFORD WOODRUFF HOME NAUVOO

Wilford Woodruff was the fourth President of the Mormon Church and as such issued the Manifesto in 1890 abolishing plural marriage. Woodruff, who was called "The Banner of the Gospels," was a remarkable man. He was one of the Apostles who traveled through England recruiting converts to come to Nauvoo to build a great city. He drove the wagon in which Brigham Young traveled to Salt Lake City and planted potatoes the day after his arrival. This was the first Idaho potato. As historian of the church, he invented a system of shorthand and used it to take down Young's sermons.





### BRANTON'S TAVERN

This old tavern is located seven miles from Galena and is prominently connected with the Black Hawk War. On its site, in August, 1832, Black Hawk and his followers met for a council under a great white oak tree. In 1840 when the old tavern was erected the tree was sawed off and the stump incorporated in the floor of the tavern. Still in a good state of preservation, the old tavern is still owned by the Branton family. This locality was formerly called the Hill of Council, and later, Council Hill.





### RUTLEDGE TAVERN

The village of New Salem was founded in 1829 by James Rutledge and John Camron. James was the father of Ann Rutledge, Lincoln's first sweetheart. The log house shown above was erected by Rutledge as a home and when the town began to flourish he built an addition to it and converted it into a tavern. The tavern changed hands several times. Rutledge sold it in November of 1832 for \$200 to Nelson Alley. Its claim to fame, as far as the artist is concerned, lies largely in the fact that it was once the home of the beautiful Ann Rutledge, who played such a prominent part in Lincoln's life at New Salem.





### MILL AT FULLERSBURG

The construction of this mill was begun in 1847 and completed in 1852. It was built by Frederick Graue and used to grind all kinds of grain. During the Civil War syrup was made here. It is built of brick made from the clay of the Graue farm and burnt in a kiln near the site. Located on Salt Creek, it was powered with an undershot waterwheel and operated by waterpower as late as 1916. The mill is in the course of restoration. The lower floor will be used to show how grain was ground in pioneer days and the upper two floors as a museum for this vicinity.





### ON PORTAGE TRAIL

This picture was painted on the Portage Trail which ran from the mouth of the Calumet River along the hills south of Stony Creek, to join the Des Plaines River at the Sag, where St. James Church now stands. It was one of the many portages used by the pioneers to reach the water route to the West, and is still preserved in the Forest Preserves of Cook County.





### COURT HOUSE AT OQUAWKA

Before this old court house Stephen A. Douglas addressed an enthusiastic group three days before his joint debate with Lincoln at Galesburg in 1858. On October 9, two days after the Galesburg debate, Lincoln also spoke here. Oquawka occupies the site of the ancient Yellow Banks where Black Hawk crossed the river for his invasion of Illinois. S. S. Phelps, a trader who enjoyed the confidence of the old Indian, tried to dissuade him from his mad idea, without success. The Black Hawk War followed. Near Oquawka are located two of the old covered bridges which are fast becoming extinct in Illinois.





### PRE-EMPTION HOUSE NAPERVILLE

Two old highways formed a junction at the Naper settlement. One ran through Oswego, Yorkville to Ottawa. The other was the southern stage route from Chicago to Galena. This made Naperville an important center of travel. Here the Pre-emption House was built and is still conducted under its original name. It is probably the oldest tavern in the state. It is a very fine example of the better class tavern of pioneer days. The frame of this building was erected by George Laird who then sold it to John Stevens, who arrived in 1832. The Pre-emption House was then the only building on the low ground. The frame work is oak and the clapboards and interior are of black walnut.





### COLONEL DAVENPORT'S HOME

Col. George L. Davenport arrived here in 1816. He became a notable trader and merchant, influential both with the Indians and the whites. In 1833 he built this fine home on Rock Island. It was here that he was murdered July 4, 1845. He helped to lay out the city of Davenport, Iowa, which bears his name. In 1832 there were only two stores in Keokuk, one of which was owned by Davenport. Near this home still stands a pier from the first bridge across the Mississippi. Rock Island was the site of Fort Armstrong, established in 1816 and evacuated twenty years later. A prison for Confederate prisoners was also maintained here during the Civil War. The United States arsenal is still located here.





## GALENA

The ancient capital of the lead mines, Galena was the first American settlement on the upper Mississippi and for many years the commercial capital of this vicinity. Architectural heirlooms are many in this quaint old town—old gray stone churches, over a hundred years old, lovely old colonial homes, all telling a story of the cultured pioneers who lived here. The old postoffice was originally a port of entry into the young United States. Galena was the home of General Grant, Gen. John A. Rawlins, Elihu B. Washburne and Bishop Vincent. The DeSoto House, built in 1855, has many historic associations. Lincoln spoke from its balcony in 1856, Grant maintained headquarters here and Jenny Lind sang in concert in the large dining room.





### JANE ADDAMS' HOME

On September 6, 1860, Jane Addams was born in Cedarville, Illinois, seven miles north of Freeport. There she attended the village school. Later Miss Addams attended Rockford Academy and then sailed for Europe to continue her studies. While visiting in London she conceived the idea for Hull House, the famous social settlement in Chicago, which she established in 1889. Jane Addams is widely known as a lecturer and writer. Her books include "Twenty Years at Hull House," "A New Conscience and an Ancient Evil," "The Long Road of Women's Memory" and "Second Twenty Years at Hull House."





### TERRAPIN RIDGE

In the vicinity of Elizabeth, on U. S. Route 20, you will find such magnificent scenery as this. . . . hills that attain mountainous proportions, some of them reaching a height of twelve hundred feet above sea level . . . and Apple River with its picturesque canyons. This is the country that Black Hawk raced madly through in 1832 to make his last stand against the whites. It is often called the "Berkshires of Illinois" which again brings to light Illinois' willingness to take second place in beauty of scenery and richness of historical background.





### ELIZABETH

Fifteen miles east of Galena, in the heart of the Apple River country, lies the village of Elizabeth. On the hill shown in this painting stood the old Apple River Fort. It is said that in the Indian War of 1832, Black Hawk, in person, and 200 braves attacked the fort. There were many women and children in the fort, but only a hand-full of men, who were called upon to fight fiercely to defend their loved ones, until reinforcements could arrive from Galena to drive the Indians away.



## LANE K. NEWBERRY

"Lane K. Newberry is following out an idea, a rather refreshing procedure in this day of general aimlessness in art. Of Mormon descent, and steeped in childhood in Mormon tradition, Newberry, since reaching his art maturity, has set himself the paint job of recording on canvas the landscape relics of the sojourn of the early Mormons in Illinois in and around Nauvoo, their early Zion before they moved on west to their permanent Canaan. Interest in these localities of a century back spread to others unconnected with Mormonism, as, for instance, the Lincoln country, and Newberry has amassed an interesting and valuable gallery of Portraits of Historic Spots. Newberry, now in his mid-thirties, studied at the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts and the Art Institute of Chicago.

"Though he has had radical instruction, his tastes persist conservative. He is interested in the objective picture, with only a dash of subjective interpretation. . . . Newberry was born in a village near Fort Madison, Iowa, of Mormon extraction on both sides. His father's mother was a cousin of Joseph Smith, founder of Mormonism and who selected Nauvoo as the Zion in the wilderness. Lane's father was Captain Newberry of the Steamer Hope, a Mississippi boat used as a lighter over the Des Moines rapids. Lane's mother was born in Salt Lake City. . . ."

C. J. BULLIET

Art Editor,

Chicago Daily News.



## A NEWLY DISCOVERED SPEECH OF LINCOLN

Delivered at Bloomington, September 26, 1854

*Edited by*

ERNEST E. EAST

A speech by Abraham Lincoln on the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, made at Bloomington on Tuesday, September 26, 1854, and previously unknown to published Illinois history, has been disclosed by an examination of the files of the *Peoria Weekly Republican* in the Peoria Public Library.

The speech was reported by Thomas Johnson Pickett, early editorial supporter of the Springfield lawyer, and occupied nearly three columns in the *Weekly Republican* of which Pickett was editor and joint proprietor. The date of publication was October 6, 1854.

Lincoln's speech was made in reply to Stephen A. Douglas, who spoke earlier in the day at Bloomington. Lincoln defended the right of the national government to exclude slavery from territories seeking admission as states, denounced the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and ridiculed the doctrine of popular sovereignty as expounded by Judge Douglas.

Pickett quoted Lincoln indirectly and made him say, among other things: "if we admit that a negro is not a man, then it is right for the government to own him and trade in the race, and it is right to allow the South to take their peculiar institution with them and plant it upon the virgin



## A NEW LINCOLN SPEECH

soil of Kansas and Nebraska . . .; but if the negro is a man then there is not even the shadow of popular sovereignty in allowing the first settlers upon such soil to decide whether it will be right in all future time to hold man in bondage there."

Issues of the Bloomington *Weekly Pantagraph* for the six-weeks' period following Lincoln's appearance have not been preserved and standard works on Lincoln contain little or nothing concerning this joint discussion, probably the first on 1854 political questions between the "Little Giant" and the tall lawyer who in less than seven years was to be President of the United States.

On October 4, 1854, Lincoln at Springfield again replied to Douglas who spoke there on October 3. The Democratic Peoria *Daily Press* said the points dwelt upon by Lincoln "were the same as those used in his Bloomington speech, full notes of which have been given in the *Republican* of this city."

Lincoln replied to Douglas for a third time in Peoria on October 16 when the two men spoke from the same platform. This speech by Lincoln is printed in Nicolay and Hay's *Complete Works*.

It was at Bloomington nearly two years later that Lincoln made his most famous so-called "lost speech." He addressed delegates to the Anti-Nebraska convention May 29, 1856.

Stephen A. Douglas, early in 1854, as chairman of the United States Senate Committee on Territories, reported out the bill to organize Nebraska. As the Kansas-Nebraska Bill it was passed by the Senate on March 4. In effect, it repealed the Compromise of 1850. The House of Representatives passed the bill May 22 and President Pierce signed it on May 30.

Abraham Lincoln had served one term in Congress but returned to the practice of law in 1849, disappointed in



politics. The Kansas-Nebraska Bill aroused him. Douglas spoke in several Illinois cities in 1854, defending his sponsorship of the act and the principle of self-government which he said it contained.

Lincoln had debated the question with John Calhoun of Springfield and had made several speeches attacking the Nebraska Bill. He was in Bloomington attending to law business on September 26 when Senator Douglas arrived to address a Democratic congressional convention. Douglas spoke in the oak grove south of the city, according to Editor Pickett of the *Peoria Republican*, who printed a brief account of the two speeches in his issue of September 29, 1854.

"Mr. Douglas was listened to in the most respectful manner," wrote Pickett. The editor added that the crowd was "fair-minded."

The *Peoria Daily Press* of September 30 said: "Judge Douglas made a most powerful speech to about 5,000 people."

Pickett stated that Douglas' speech was stenographically reported by Dr. E. R. Roe of Bloomington and newspapers were to accept his copy as correct.

The *Republican* editor continued to say that Lincoln spoke in the evening in the court house "which was crowded to the capacity." He added that he took "extended notes" on Lincoln's remarks and expected to present both the speeches of Lincoln and Douglas.

Evidently Pickett did not receive Douglas' speech for on page one of the *Weekly Republican* of October 6, he said: "We have been waiting for the receipt of Mr. Douglas' speech in Bloomington which we understand will be published in the Press as stenographically reported by Dr. Roe. We desired to have the Judge's speech published entire before we gave Mr. Lincoln's in reply. If, however, we receive no copy of the report by tonight's mail, we shall tomorrow give the purport of the speech as near as we can



## A NEW LINCOLN SPEECH

from memory, and then publish our report on Lincoln's rejoinder."

Pickett published a daily, as well as a weekly, and it seems likely that the foregoing was printed in his daily of October 5 and the type picked up for use in his weekly of October 6. His summary of Douglas' remarks and his report of Lincoln's reply were printed on page two of the *Weekly Republican*.

Although a city of 10,000 or less in 1854, Peoria had three daily newspapers and four weeklies.

Thomas Johnson Pickett was born March 17, 1821, in Louisville, Kentucky, and died December 24, 1891, at Ashland, Nebraska. He came to Peoria in 1836, learned printing and engaged in several newspaper ventures before June, 1850, when he founded the *Peoria Weekly Republican*. He later published also a tri-weekly and a daily edition of the *Republican*. Pickett was a militant Whig and as early as 1852 printed editorial praise of Abraham Lincoln. His enthusiasm for the qualities of leadership he saw in Lincoln increased through the campaigns of 1854 and 1856. On February 22, 1856, the day of the editorial convention in Decatur attended by Lincoln and Pickett, among others, the Peoria editor printed in the *Republican* an editorial headed, "For Governor, Abram Lincoln." He said of Lincoln, among other things: "Coming into our state (to take his own statement) flourishing an ox-gad, he has gradually won his way up from distinction to distinction."

Pickett left Peoria early in 1857, published the *Tazewell Register* at Pekin for a year or more, and in 1859 founded the *Register* at Rock Island. From Rock Island he wrote to Lincoln expressing a desire to discuss with Lincoln a plan to organize Republican editors for the purpose of announcing the Springfield lawyer's candidacy for the Presidency. It was in response to Pickett's letter that Lin-



coln wrote April 13, 1859, "I must in candor say I do not think myself fit for the presidency."

Under a single line head, "SPEECH OF ABRAM LINCOLN," the Republican carried the story of the Bloomington discussions as follows:

## SPEECH OF ABRAM LINCOLN

In Reply to Senator Douglas

At Bloomington, Tuesday, Sept. 26

The following is a skeleton of the argument of Mr. Douglas: The introduction of the Nebraska bill was a measure for which there was an immediate necessity, in view of the dangers and difficulties attending emigration to the Pacific. As long as the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska were unorganized, the Indians might prey upon travelers unchecked, and the march of civilization on our Western borders would be thus impeded.

All parties—Democratic, Whig, Free Soil and Abolition, had at different times abandoned the restrictive line of the Missouri Compromise, repudiating it as unjust.

There was not a person present, with the exception of himself who ever was in favor of the Missouri Compromise. He proposed in 1848 to extend the line to the Pacific, but the Abolitionists opposed him and defeated the measure.

The Democratic and Whig parties, in their National Conventions, had ratified the doctrine of Non-Intervention advanced by Mr. Cass in his Nicholson letter and established by the adoption of the Compromise Measures of 1850.

The Nebraska Bill embodied the precise principle of the Compromise Measures of '50.

He had been instructed by the Legislature of Illinois to carry out, so far as lay in his power, the principle of Non-Intervention on the part of Congress.

The Doctrine of Self-Government was supported by



Clay and Webster in the last days of their lives, and that doctrine was embodied in the Nebraska Bill.

Was it, then, an act of *infamy* for him, as Chairman of the Committee on Territories, to introduce the bill that he did? Could he have consistently submitted any other than that measure, or could he have left out any part of the bill and kept in the line of his instructions?

The Whig party had been swallowed up by the Abolitionists in the "fusion," which he called the "Black Republican" party.

Mr. Lincoln said:

He would begin by noticing that part of the Judge's speech with which he closed (the homily upon the Know-Nothings) and he would say on the start, that, like many others he *Knew Nothing* in regard to the Know-Nothings, and he had serious doubts whether such an organization existed—if such was the case, he had been slighted, for no intimation thereof had been vouchsafed to him. But he would say in all seriousness, that if such an organization, secret or public, as Judge Douglas had described, really existed, and had for its object interference with the rights of foreigners, the judge could not deprecate it more severely than himself. If there was an order styled the Know-Nothings, and there was anything bad in it, he was unqualifiedly against it; if there was anything good in it, why, he said God speed it! [Laughter and applause] But he would like to be informed on one point: if such a Society existed, and the members were bound by such horrid oaths as Judge Douglas told about, he would really like to know how the Judge found out his secrets? [Renewed laughter.]

He would, before proceeding to the main argument, touch upon another subject. The Judge had called the new party *Black Republicans*. He might call names and thereby pander to prejudice, as much as he chose: he [Mr. L.] would not bandy such language with him; but inasmuch as the Judge said there had been a swallowing up of the Whigs by the Black Republicans or Abolitionists, he would like to have him look at his



own case. Where were now the Democratic majorities that were received by Mr. Pierce in 1852? Where are the 15,000 in New Hampshire and the 5,000 in Maine? Where are the former majorities of the democracy in Connecticut, in Iowa? Are they not swallowed up? And by what element? What right had Judge Douglas to intimate that none but abolitionists and tender-footed whigs were embraced in the "fusion" and that whigs were the only ones "swallowed" up? The Abolitionists had swallowed up a great many of the Judge's friends, and more of them, if anything, than of whigs. But he didn't think there was a very serious or alarming swallowing-up on either side—nothing in the least dangerous save to the Judge and his allies.

Mr. Lincoln then proceeded to meet the main position of Mr. Douglas:

What was the Missouri Compromise? Shortly after the organization of the Government we acquired the Northwest Territory. Under the auspices of Jefferson an Ordinance was enacted in 1787 prohibiting slavery forever in that territory. Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin came into the Union as free states, under what is *now* called an infraction of the sacred right of self-government. By that infraction a section of country whose career in prosperity has no parallel, has been thus secured to freedom. In 1803 Mr. Jefferson purchased for \$15,000,000 the territory of Louisiana, which was afterwards divided and two territories formed therefrom—New Orleans and St. Louis. New Orleans came into the Union as a State, under the title of Louisiana, in 1812, and met with no opposition on account of her slavery, because it already existed there. In 1818 Missouri manifested a desire to come into the Union. A portion of the States set up against authorizing her to form a State constitution. A bill might have been passed through the House admitting Missouri without the slavery restriction, but it could not have passed the Senate. Finally the matter was settled by the Northern members consenting to the admission of Missouri, with the understanding that in consideration thereof the South consented that slavery



shall forever be prohibited from entering any territory north of 36 degrees 30 minutes. A new contest then sprung [*sic*] up in regard to the clause which the bill contained excluding free negroes from the State, and another compromise was tacked onto the old one—altogether forming the Missouri Compromise. The question which caused the whole controversy was in reference to slavery in the territory that we purchased of France—including the present States of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri and Iowa, and the territories of Minnesota, Kansas and Nebraska—and *over that only*.

After this Compromise had stood a good long time, a gentleman, in language much finer and more elegant than he [Mr. L.] was capable of constructing, expressed himself in reference to it as follows:

“All the evidence of public opinion at that day seemed to indicate that this Compromise had become canonized in the hearts of the American people as a sacred thing, which no ruthless hand should attempt to disturb.”

This was certainly very strong, and it was spoken after the Missouri Compromise had been in existence 29 years. Who was it that uttered this sentiment? What “Black Republican”?—[Immense laughter. A voice “Douglas.”] No other than Judge Douglas himself. A more beautiful or more forceful expression was not to be found in the English language.

Who, then, was or had been opposed to the Missouri Compromise? [Sensation and applause.]

The manner in which Judge Douglas proved that the Democracy were formerly opposed to the Missouri Compromise was by asserting that they united upon Gen. Cass’s Nicholson letter, which embodied a doctrine contrary to the principle of the Restrictive Line. One year previous to the writing of that letter the Wilmot Proviso was introduced, and Gen. Cass had on several occasions expressed himself in favor of it. Those expressions had cut him off from Southern votes, and he found he must do something to regain the good opinion of the South: so, on sober-second thought, he concluded to write that famous letter, which secured



his nomination for the Presidency in 1848—and also secured his defeat. [Laughter.] But Judge Douglas said that the Democracy united on the Nicholson letter, and consequently repudiated the Missouri Compromise, as all the other parties had previously done. He tells us, however, that he introduced a proposition to extend the Missouri Compromise to the Pacific. *This was several months AFTER the Nicholson letter was written*, and thus the Judge was in favor of the Compromise after his whole party had united upon a doctrine which he now says is inconsistent with it! We must all have our mouths stopped by Judge Douglas, and receive his assertion that we have all been opposed to the Missouri Compromise, but he himself could have voted to extend it clear through to the Pacific. *He* was the only person ever in favor of the Compromise—who, then, passed it in the Senate in 1848? These (said Mr. Lincoln, in his earnest style) are all *after-thoughts*—ALL, ALL.

The Whigs voted against the extension of the Missouri Compromise to the Pacific. Now could that pass as a reasonable argument in favor of the Judge's proposition that they were against the Compromise itself? If, said Mr. Lincoln, I and my partner erect a house together, and he proposes to build an addition to it, do I, by my opposition to his plan, intimate a desire to have the whole house burned or torn down? It might just as well be asserted that a horse was not a horse, or that black was white, as that the refusal to enlarge or extend anything was the same as an expression of opinion against it. Yet this was the same kind of sophistry used by Judge Douglas; and if you take away this foundation, all his arguments on this point fall to the ground. It is hard, said Mr. Lincoln, to argue against such nonsense. The Judge puts words in the mouths of his audience with which to call them fools because no one interrupts him with a denial of his assertions, he takes them as admitted by the people, and builds upon them his monstrous and ridiculous propositions. He knows very well that the people have NOT always been



opposed to the Missouri Compromise, [Many cries of No! No! Never!] although no one answered his question today in the affirmative. [Mr. Douglas had said in his speech "Is there a man here, except myself, who ever was in favor of the Missouri Compromise?" and a blank silence followed—*Ed Rep.*]

Mr. Lincoln then reviewed the New Mexican question, in its bearings upon the present issue. President Polk concluded that he could acquire more territory if he had more money, and asked Congress for \$2,000,000 with which to purchase New Mexico. To the bill granting this sum Mr. Wilmot moved an amendment providing that slavery shall be prohibited from entering the territory under consideration. This defeated the bill at that time. The Wilmot Proviso had nothing to do with the Northwest Territory or the Louisiana purchase, and the Missouri Compromise had nothing to do with New Mexico or Oregon, or with any other territory save that to which it was originally applied. By the treaty of peace with Mexico in 1848 we acquired California and in two years she applied for admission as a State. She came with a constitution prohibiting slavery, but there was a sufficient majority in the Senate to prevent her entering free. Then the question of boundary between Texas and New Mexico arose, and added to the agitation. The old fugitive slave law was then found to be insufficient. And finally the famous Georgia Pen, in Washington, where negroes were bought and sold within sight of the National Capitol, began to grow offensive in the nostrils of all good men, Southerners as well as Northerners. All these subjects got into the Omnibus Bill which was intended as a compromise between the North and the South, and the measures of which, although defeated in the aggregate, were all passed separately. The measures which the North gained by the passage of the Adjustment of 1850 were, the admission of California with a free Constitution and the discontinuance of the Georgia Pen; and those which the South gained were, the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law and the territorial bills of Utah and New Mexico, and the



settlement of the Texas boundary. The North gained two measures and the South three. Such was the Compromise of 1850—a measure for the benefit of the South as well as of the North, and acquiesced in by the Whig and the Democratic parties of the country.

Now what was there in the Compromise Measures of '50 that repudiated the Missouri Compromise? The North secured that portion of the Louisiana Purchase north of 36.30 to freedom, by giving the South what they demanded as an equivalent therefor, namely, Missouri. We got it fairly and honestly, by paying for it: then what reason was there in endeavoring to make the stipulation upon which we purchased it apply as a principle to other and all future territories? The Missouri Compromise was a contract made between the North and the South, by which the former got all the Louisiana purchase north, and the latter all south, of the line 36.30, *within that territory*. There was no show of sense in endeavoring to make this bargain apply to any future territory acquired by the United States.

Mr. L. reviewed with much keenness the sophistry, upon which great dependence is placed by the advocates of the Nebraska scheme, that the principle of allowing States to settle their own domestic institutions was applicable to the territories. He traced the relation that existed between them and the Government, showed them to be dependencies of it, and held up in the proper light the absurd proposition that Government could lay no restriction upon soil which it has bought and paid for, and over which it exercises a parental care.

He contended that the only way slavery could get a foothold anywhere was by going in by slow degrees, little by little, before there were people enough to form a territorial government. Then, when the government is to be organized, slavery is already on the ground — a "local institution" — and has an equal chance with freedom. Said Mr. L., if you will keep slavery out of any territory until there are 50,000



inhabitants, I will risk the chances of its ever being established there. He would venture on the good sense of fifty thousand people—that number could keep slavery out of South Carolina, were it not for the fact that it is already there. The argument that Kansas would be a slave State is that slavery *now exists* there, by recognition of Congress. It has already obtained a foothold, and is an institution of the territory—one of their “domestic institutions.”


The sacred right of self-government, rightly understood, no one appreciated more than himself. But the Nebraska measure so far from carrying out that right, was the grossest violation of it.—The principle that men or States have the right of regulating their own affairs, is morally right and politically wise. Individuals held the sacred right to regulate their own family affairs; communities might arrange their internal matters to suit themselves; States might make their own statutes, subject only to the Constitution of the whole country; no one disagreed with this doctrine. It had, however, no application to the question at present at issue, namely, whether slavery, a moral, social and political evil, should or should not exist in territory owned by the Government, over which the Government had control, and which looked to the Government for protection—unless it be true that a negro is not a man; if not, then it is no business of ours whether or not he is enslaved upon soil which belongs to us, any more than it is our business to trouble ourselves about the oyster-trade, cranberry-trade, or any other legitimate traffic carried on by the people in territory owned by the Government. If we admit that a negro is not a man, then it is right for the Government to own him and trade in the race, and it is right to allow the South to take their peculiar institution with them and plant it upon the virgin soil of Kansas and Nebraska. If the negro is not a man, it is consistent to apply the same sacred right of popular sovereignty to the question as to whether the people of the territories shall or shall not have slavery; but if the negro, upon soil where



slavery is not legalized by law and sanctioned by custom is a man, then there is not even the shadow of popular sovereignty in allowing the first settlers upon such soil to decide whether it be right in all future time to hold men in bondage there.

Judge Douglas had said that the Illinois legislature passed resolutions instructing him to repeal the Missouri Compromise.—But said Mr. L., the Judge, when he refers to resolutions of instruction, always gets those which never passed both houses of the Legislature. The legislature [passed] a resolution upon this subject which the Judge either forgot or didn't choose to read. No man who voted to pull down the Missouri Compromise represented the people, and [the legislature?] of this State never instructed Douglas or anyone else to commit that act. And yet the Judge had told the people that they *were* in favor of repealing the Missouri Compromise, and all must acquiesce in his assumption or be denounced as abolitionists. What sophistry is this, said Mr. L., to contend and insist that you did instruct him to effect the repeal of the Missouri Compromise when you knew you never thought of such a thought of it [Cries of "No! No!"]—that all the people of Illinois have always been opposed to that Compromise, when no man will say that he ever thought of its repeal previous to the introduction of the Nebraska bill.

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 We have touched only upon the principal points of Mr. Lincoln's remarks, and regret that we are not able to present our readers with a fuller idea of what all admit is one of the ablest speeches made in the present canvass.



## AN ABORIGINAL VILLAGE SITE IN UNION COUNTY

*By*

*BRUCE W. MERWIN*

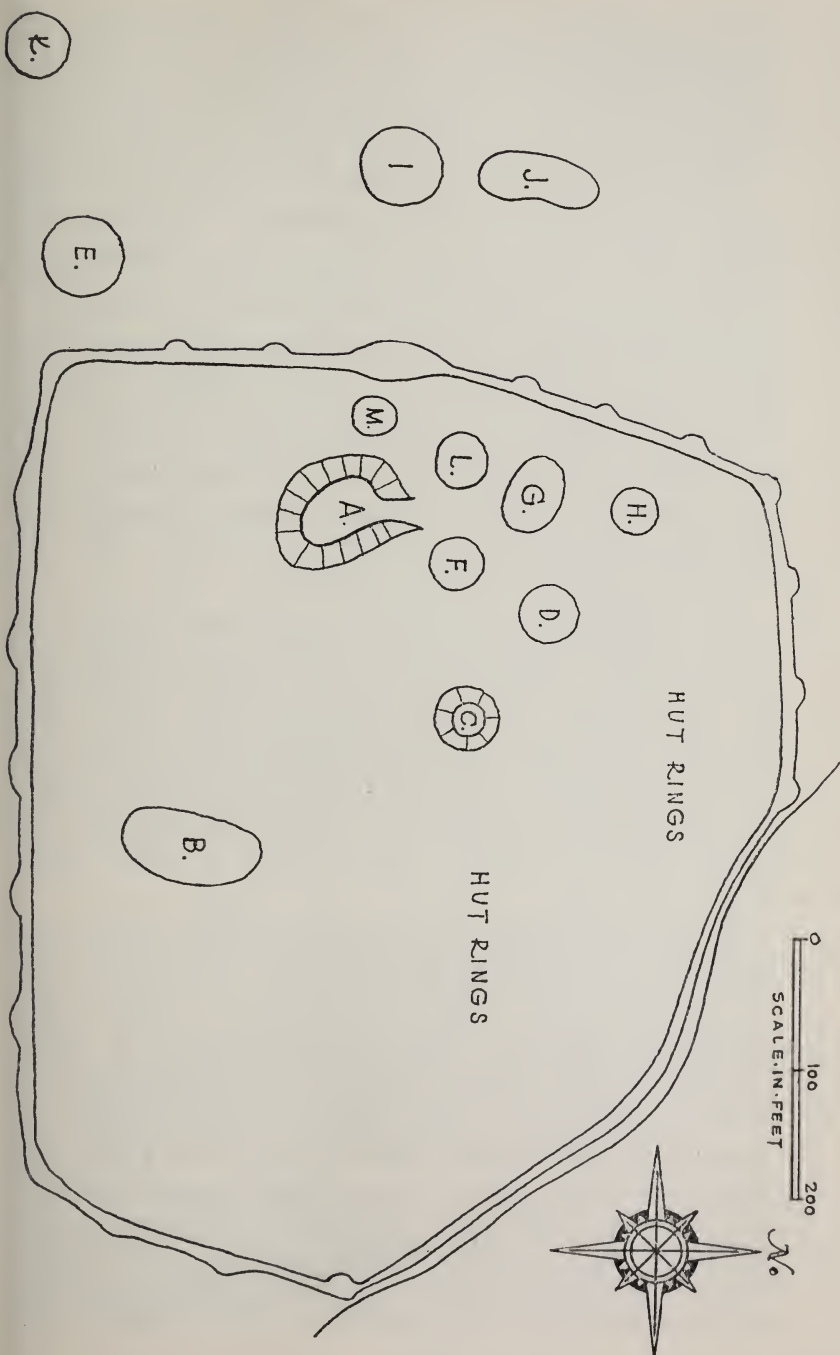
In the July, 1934, issue of the *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, Mr. W. N. Moyers described in a very interesting manner seven of the so-called "stone forts" of Southern Illinois. In three papers presented before the Illinois Academy of Science, the present writer had called attention to some other archaeological remains. As all of these articles seem to have focused attention on this area, it was suggested that a large aboriginal village site be described as it is and as it probably was when occupied, and that an hypothesis be advanced as to the date of occupancy and the identity of the occupants.

This village site is located about one mile south and one and one-half miles east of Reynoldsville, Union County, Illinois, in the southeast quarter of Section Thirty on what is known as the Linn farm. The first published account of it is by Mr. T. M. Perrin in the Smithsonian Institution report for 1872, page 418. Part of his account follows:

The most extensive works of the mound-builders in this country are situated in the Mississippi bottom, fifteen miles from Anna. At that point the creek makes a bend resembling very much in shape a horse-shoe, which renders the place very favorable for a defensive work. The earth-work follows the bend in the creek, and is, at this time, about four feet high. The entrance



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## AN ABORIGINAL VILLAGE SITE

to the inclosure is on the south side, with a large oblong mound in front of the opening. This mound is about thirty feet by fifty, and about thirty feet high at the highest point, with a depression in the center, which makes it appear in profile like a double mound.

West of this mound, a short distance, is a round mound about thirty feet in diameter and fifteen feet high. The earth-work incloses about twenty acres. Within the area of the inclosure there is another mound covering about two acres, which is evidently a sepulchral remain, as a large number of skeletons have been found in it, none of them perfect, however, though the earth is compact and dry. The skulls are very large, but fall to pieces on being exposed to the air. One skull has been found that would have measured thirty-six inches in circumference. The skeletons in this mound were all carefully inclosed with flat stones, each skeleton being separate.

The other mounds appear to have been used for another purpose, probably for defense, as nothing has been found in them. Half of the inclosure, as well as all the mounds, are in a cultivated field. The round mound to the west of the opening and part of the earth-work are in the woods, and covered with large timber. In the sepulchral mound are found pottery-ware, and stone and flint articles, but no metal or bone implements. . . .

Since writing you I have made another visit to the mounds in the "Mississippi bottom," and as I have obtained some rather interesting additions to what I communicated before, I have concluded to write again. We first opened the mound described as the large mound in front of the opening of the earth-works. It was my intention to have dug a ditch through the mound, but the weather was so warm the men could not endure the work, so I commenced by sinking a hole in the center where the depression which I mentioned exists. After going down about three feet we came to what looked like a chimney made of sun-burned brick, and on removing some four feet of this we came to the



foundation. We then ditched both ways, east and west, and came on one side to a wall, on removing the earth from which, we found it to be arched. The arch appeared to have been formed in three layers of stone with a layer of grass between each, but looked as though it had been exposed to fire. At the bottom and around the chimney there appeared to have been placed a matting made of cane, but not firm enough to be moved only in small particles. Here we found earthen pots respectively of the capacity of one, one and a half, and two gallons; the large pot was unfortunately broken in removing it. I also found an image, but differing from the other one I found; this one is hollow and holds half a pint, with a good face and a fine bust. It is evidently intended to represent a woman with the arms hanging on the side, and the hands folded across the abdomen; the opening is on the back of the head. I also found a small ornament of rock crystal three-fourths of an inch long, with a small hole through one end; in color it is a beautiful purple, and perfectly translucent. This mound, I am under the impression, was a dwelling-place, from the fact that nothing indicated that it has been used for anything else. Furthermore, we found under the arch a large quantity of charcoal, which appeared as if it had been burned in the place. The arch, we ascertained by digging holes, run through the mound from east to west, and is about six inches thick. I have no doubt but that this is quite an interesting mound, and if properly examined would show much relative to the habits of the moundbuilders.

I forgot to mention that I found one of those stones with a hole through it, known in this vicinity by the name of "tool-stones;" it is about two inches in diameter. I also found three handsome flints.

Some twenty years later the Twelfth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology published a good sketch and short description of the group, indicating that it was very much as it is at the present time.



## AN ABORIGINAL VILLAGE SITE

### THE PRESENT SITE

The village proper contains about thirty acres and is in the form of a rectangle 1050 feet by 1150 feet. Clear Creek formerly ran along the east and northeast sides, separating the village from the high bluff to the east. The soil is sandy alluvium. The accompanying sketch map shows the village is surrounded by a wall or dirt ridge and contains five mounds and four large circular depressions or sinks and almost one hundred hut rings.

Mound A has been plowed down so that its original contour has been destroyed. It appears to have been an irregular truncated pyramid about 160 feet on a side and twelve feet high. On top of this at the southeast corner appears to have been an additional conical mound, now only two feet high. Extending northeast from the north corner was a graded way leading down to the village level and to Mound F. This mound (A) contained considerable ash and burnt clay and a small amount of pottery. The clay seemed to have been smoothed down, then covered with grass and wood, which were burned and then covered before they were completely consumed, leaving charred bits. Mr. Perrin excavated in this mound.

Mound B is a long, low mound, 190 feet by sixty feet by four feet, that has been lowered by cultivation. Some bones and a little pottery occur here, indicating that this was a burial mound as reported by Mr. Perrin.

Mound C is very prominent, being in the form of a truncated cone 125 feet in diameter at the base, forty feet at the top, and about ten feet in height.

Mound D is about 100 feet in diameter and six feet high. Mound F has about the same diameter but is only about three feet high.

Mound E, a short distance west of the southwest corner of the village wall, is about 150 feet in diameter and three feet high. Some burials were reported in this mound.



Inside the wall and along the west side of the village are four depressions or sinks. The largest of these, G, is oval, 160 feet by 100 feet and about six feet deep. Sink L is circular, 100 feet in diameter and five feet deep. Sink H is also about 100 feet in diameter but only three feet deep. Sink M is of the same diameter and about four feet deep. From these the material to construct the mounds was doubtless taken, but the bottoms were carefully smoothed and perhaps lined with gumbo.

Outside the wall and perhaps 300 feet west are two additional depressions. One (I) is circular, about 100 feet in diameter and five feet deep. The other (J) is somewhat kidney-shaped, about 160 feet long, seventy-five feet wide, and four feet deep. Another depression (K), about eighty feet in diameter and four feet deep, is located about 300 feet west of the southwest corner of the village and probably furnished building material for mound E.

The wall is at present flattened out, due to cultivation, to a height of between one and four feet and a width of fifteen to twenty-five feet. Thomas gives the dimensions quite accurately as 1030 by 1160 feet. About midway of the west side of the enclosure the wall is much wider, indicating the location of an entrance. About every 100 feet there is a decided enlargement of the wall indicating the presence of a series of bastions or block-houses, which must have been ten or fifteen feet square. Just outside the south wall appears to have been a sort of a ditch or moat.

In the north half of the village, which has not been extensively cultivated, are many, possibly 100, circular depressions from twenty to fifty feet in diameter and one to two feet deep. These are close together and give one the impression of having been laid out in straight rows. The entire surface about these hut rings is covered with broken flint implements, flint chips, potsherds, and a few fragments of human bone.



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Over-looked by mounds A, B, C, and F, appears to have been a town square characterized by a scarcity of typical village site material. East of it in the cultivated field south of the area occupied by the hut rings, were probably still other house sites that have been plowed over. This seems probable since large amounts of flints and potsherds and some bones of a nine or ten year old child were found here.

### THE ENVIRONS OF THE VILLAGE SITE

In the same neighborhood there are many stone burials indicating that the sites were occupied for a long time by a rather large number of people. In general these burials occur along the tops of the bluffs east of the village and extend for several miles. In Happy Hollow, a short distance south of the village, small stone graves are reported as occurring in eight tiers.

About a mile and one-half northwest of the Linn Place is another village site including two or three mounds on which considerable pottery was found. Some of the pottery was painted red on both sides. About two miles farther north of this were reported two or three mounds and a walled enclosure, while about three miles still farther north, at Ware, are two large mounds, two or more small ones, and a village site which is locally identified as having been occupied by the Omaha Indians and having been visited by Marquette. At Mill Creek four to six miles east of the Linn site are extensive flint works, possibly the most extensive in the United States. These are accompanied by truncated pyramidal mounds and circular hut rings and stone graves, similar to those found in the Linn Place. It would appear that both sites were occupied contemporaneously and by the same tribe of Indians. Nearly twenty miles up Clear Creek, near Kaolin, are other flint quarries and extensive work-shops likewise representative of this same culture.



### CHARACTERISTIC DETAILS OF THIS VILLAGE

The characteristic features of this village, which are extensively shared with other villages along the Mississippi, Ohio, Cumberland, and Tennessee rivers, are as follows:

(1) A walled enclosure more or less circular or semi-circular situated on a bluff or steep bank of a stream, the bluff or bank forming one side of the enclosure. In most cases there is a ditch inside of the wall. There may be slight elevations or wide places on the wall, indicating towers.

(2) One large truncated pyramidal mound, with a graded way or apron and a flat-top conical mound seemingly superimposed on one corner. This is not primarily a burial mound but contains ashes and hearths which indicate its use for residential or religious purposes.

(3) One or more large conical mounds, which may or may not be flat-topped.

(4) A number of smaller tumuli, often containing stone graves.

(5) A number of large artificial circular depressions or sinks.

(6) One or more stone grave cemeteries near-by.

(7) Many hut rings, twenty to fifty feet in diameter and one to three feet in depth at the center.

(8) Large flint hoes, indicating a sedentary agricultural people.

(9) Well-made pottery, the water-bottle type being quite common.

At Aztalan, Wisconsin, is a similar village site which has been carefully studied by Dr. S. A. Barrett, who reports the probable existence of cannibalism. This same custom is indicated among the inhabitants of the Linn site. Part way between Mill Creek and the Linn Place on the top of



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a hill was a stone pavement or possibly a sacrificial altar. It was nearly circular, about nine feet in diameter and about one foot below the surface. It was composed of flat pieces of limestone neatly and closely fitted together. These rocks showed the effect of hot prolonged fires, some of them crumbling to lime when disturbed. Above these rocks were ashes, charcoal, and charred broken fragments of human bones; these had doubtless been mashed or broken for the marrow. It is suggested that these were places where prisoners were burned and sometimes eaten. Somewhat similar stone pavements are reported from Whiteside and Cass counties, Illinois, Fort Ancient, Ohio, and western Pennsylvania. In Tennessee similar structures of clay retain the marks of a central post or stake and thus tend to verify this suggestion that captives were "burned at the stake."

### RECONSTRUCTION OF THE SITE

Let us now see what the original conditions were; how things were 300 years or more ago. Encircling the whole village was a palisade composed of a double line of logs about eight inches in diameter and ten feet high. Additional strength was provided by horizontal poles lashed on the inner wall, while the difficulty of scaling was made greater by plastering over the outer surface with mud and grass, giving the whole a sort of smooth stucco-like appearance. (DeSoto had difficulty in scaling the walls of a similar village, and it was only after the outside coating had been removed from the wall that he was able to enter the village.) Outside the wall also was a ditch which must have contained water throughout much of the year. Spaced about every ninety feet along the wall were bastions from ten to fifteen feet square (or semi-circular) rising six to eight feet above the general wall and providing shelter for from three to eight warriors. The main gate-way to the



village seems to have been on the west side between two of these turrets, and led on to a causeway which in turn was covered by two mounds. On either side of the causeway were ponds, which were left when the dirt was removed to build the mounds.

Near the center of the village is the town square—an open place about the size of a football field. It was overlooked and partially enclosed by four mounds and a number of open shed-like structures which would provide shade in the summer for the loafers and workers. Due to the darkness of the interior of the huts much of the work was done in these sheds in the summer time. At the north end of the town square, on the large central mound, was a structure called the “hot-house.” This name does not mean that it was a place used for the Turkish or sweat bath but means that it was a place where fire was kept constantly burning. Here the guests of the village were entertained and the general indoor meetings were held. Here the poor or those who lacked clothing were allowed to sleep in winter.

West of the square was a large, and what seemed to be the most important, mound. It had the chief's dwelling at one end and on the slight elevation at the other must have been a small structure which served either as a chapel or as a pulpit from which a speaker could address the people in the town square. The long low mound to the southeast was the local cemetery and contained a number of burials in stone slab coffins.

Outside of the walls and extending over the flood plain for several miles were cornfields occasionally interspersed by mounds and small outlying hamlets.

North and east of the town square, arranged in irregular rows, were the houses of the village. It seems that the larger houses, occupied by the more important people, were closest to the town square. In general, the houses were circular from twenty to fifty feet in diameter with dome-



shaped roofs. Following is a description of the Omaha house by Fletcher and LaFlesche in *The Omaha Tribe, Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, Page 97.

The earth lodge was a circular dwelling, having walls about eight feet high and a dome-shaped roof, with a central opening for the escape of smoke and the admission of light. The task of building an earth lodge was shared by men and women. The marking out of the site and the cutting of the heavy logs were done by the men. When the location was chosen, a stick was thrust in the spot where the fireplace was to be, one end of a raw-hide rope was fastened to the stick, and a circle twenty to sixty feet in diameter was drawn on the earth to mark where the wall was to be erected. The sod within the circle was removed, the ground excavated a foot in depth, and the earth thrown around the circle like an embankment. Small crotched posts about ten feet high were set eight or ten feet apart and one and one-half feet within the circle, and on these were laid beams. Outside this frame split posts were set close together, having one end braced against the beams, thus forming a wall of timber. The opening generally, though not always, faced the east. Midway between the central fireplace and the wall were planted four to eight large crotched posts about ten feet in height, on which heavy beams rested, these serving to support the roof. This was made of long, slender, tapering trees stripped of their bark. These were tied at the large ends with cords (made from the inner bark of the linden) to the beams at the top of the stockade and at the middle to those resting in the crotches of the large posts forming the inner circle about the fireplace. The slender ends were cut so as to form the circular opening for the smoke, the edges being woven together with elm twine, so as to be firm. Outside the woodwork of the walls and roof, branches of willow were laid crosswise and bound tight to each slab and pole. Over the willows a heavy thatch of coarse grass was arranged so as to shed water. On the



grass was placed a thick coating of sod. The sods were cut to lap and be laid like shingles.

Indications are that this village must have housed between 1000 and 1500 people, which number could only have assembled in a permanent village where agriculture was the main source of food.

#### IDENTITY OF THE OCCUPANTS

It has been suggested that this site might have been occupied by some of the Algonquin Indians, such as the Illinois, Miami, or Shawnee, none of whom has ever been reported as using large round houses, and when it is realized that the Illinois Indians were comparatively late comers, arriving in Southern Illinois about 1700, it does not seem likely that they constructed this village. Again, while it bears certain affinities to some of the southern tribes, there are many features which do not admit identifying it as Creek or Cherokee.

There are several unmistakable lines of evidence that seem to indicate that this was a Siouian settlement. It has already been pointed out that the form of dwelling corresponds closely to that of the Omaha Indians. There is a tradition supported by conclusive evidence that at some period not yet forgotten a group of Siouian Indians came down the Ohio River, and the Quapaw went down the Mississippi to live, while the Osage and Omaha went upstream and over into Missouri. In the Forty-First Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Mr. Myer describes the excavations at the Gordon town site near Nashville, Tennessee, and concludes that its inhabitants were descended from early settlers of southeast West Virginia and southwest Virginia. Water-bottle shaped vessels and encircled equal-arm cross designs seem to be common elements. Mr. Myer finds related sites in many places in Tennessee and Kentucky. Farther down the Ohio River a



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number of similar places are located between Shawneetown and the Mississippi. Mr. Myer's report also indicates a rather close relation between his Gordon people and the Madisonville, Ohio, representatives of the Fort Ancient culture. Dr. John R. Swanton has unmistakably identified these as the Monsupilia, a Siouian tribe that was later encountered in northwest Mississippi. There are a number of local traditions indicating that some Siouian groups, either the Osage or Omaha, occupied villages near DeSoto, McClure, and Olive Branch. Unverified reports indicate that Marquette encountered an Omaha village midway between the mouth of Clear Creek and the Big Muddy, which is also the location of the Linn site. Another of these reports indicate that there was a Quapaw village near Olmstead on the Ohio River.

Another bit of evidence indicating the possibility that this site was occupied by some Siouian division is furnished by Bushnell in Bulletin 177 of the American Bureau of Ethnology, page 111, as follows:

Probably no section of the country has revealed more traces of aboriginal occupancy than has that part of the Mississippi from the Ohio to the Arkansas. This was the region traversed by the Quapaw (a Siouian tribe) during the latter part of their migration from their earlier habitat east of the Mississippi, and may have been occupied by them since the Fifteenth century or before. Many of the mound groups, village sites and burial places occurring within this area may undoubtedly be justly attributed to the Quapaw. Vast quantities of earthenware vessels of great variety of size and forms have been recovered from the sites north of the Arkansas and these often present marked characteristics differing from the wares found farther south. The Quapaw are known to have been skilled pottery makers. Therefore, it is more than probable that much of the ancient pottery encountered in this part of the Mississippi valley was



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made by this southern Siouian tribe. . . . DeSoto, 1541, mentions the towns being protected by encircling embankments and ditches. The former were probably surmounted by palisades.

### DATE OF OCCUPANCY

It would appear that this village was occupied shortly before 1650. About this time the Iroquois, having obtained guns from the Dutch, literally conquered all of the area now occupied by Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The inhabitants of the Illinois territory doubtless fled into Missouri. The period of occupancy could not have been much later than this time because of the lack of specimens showing contact with white people. It has been suggested that the period of occupancy must have been prior to the coming of the large herds of buffalo which were found in Illinois by 1700. The large number of broken flint hoes found on the site indicate an agricultural people, while the scarcity of arrow points tends to verify this conclusion. Probably at least a century would be necessary for a village to develop as this one did and to account for the vast number of burials, both in the village and on the surrounding bluffs. The evidence seems to indicate that this village was occupied continuously for at least a century ending sometime before the advent of the whites.

It is hoped that this article will call attention to the aboriginal villages of Southern Illinois, and that the state or some institution will see fit to undertake a study of them with the ultimate purpose of preserving them and making them into public parks.



## HISTORICAL NOTES

### CEREMONIES AT THE GRAVE OF THOMAS LINCOLN

On December 2, 1934, as noted in the January Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, an ornamental fence around the graves of Thomas and Sarah Lincoln in the Gordon-Shiloh Cemetery near Charleston was dedicated. On that occasion Dr. John T. Thomas, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Springfield, Illinois, made the dedicatory address as the representative of Governor Horner. Doctor Thomas's remarks, received too late for inclusion in the January Journal, are printed here in order that they may be permanently preserved.

Thomas Lincoln, we are gathered today to honor your memory as a worthy sire of a noble son. But it is not ours to consecrate this bit of Illinois soil. Your son, Abraham, long ago spoke true and noble words when he said, in effect, on a famous battle field, "We cannot hallow ground." We cannot lay an unholy soul in sacred soil. This plot is long since hallowed as the final resting place of you who were privileged to become the father of a great man and good. And who would ask a nobler heritage?

We are not forgetting that you were a pioneer, and early settler, that you left a cabin home in a neighbor state, and launched forth into a roadless wilderness, in a covered wagon. Kentucky little noted, nor long remembered, your departure. Indiana and Illinois did not come as we, a vast throng, have come today to welcome you. Only the trees and the tangled grass of a virgin prairie saw you and your quiet family pass by.



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Your first house among us, like the one you left, was carved from our forests by your own honest hands. But your first roof made from shingles you yourself rived, sheltered and nurtured more than you knew.

Humanity has had many favored sons privileged to render lofty service in various fields. Since first you came, surveyors have platted our vast and rolling land, and laid it out into counties, townships, cities, farms and homes. We have builded many miles of ribbon roads where you plod through mud and mire. We have erected schools illuminated with electricity where Abraham learned to read by his log fire or flickering candle. We have adopted constitutions and enacted laws with the assistance of your son. Our scientists have counted the stars, read the rocks and mapped the rivers. Recently, Mr. Lincoln, we have had here in Illinois a marvelous pageant in one of the great cities of the world, commemorating a "Century of Progress." There we displayed and looked upon the things we have conceived with our minds and made with our hands. They were different, vastly so, from the things you envisioned and made. I shall not disturb your rest by recounting all that was there, the startling changes and what we call "progress." The architecture, the illumination, the machinery, the inventions, the lightning-like means of transportation and communication, the discovery of nature's laws and the harnessing of her forces.

But I do want to tell you that your son was there. We erected a replica of his cabin-home which you built. We reconstructed the scenes of his early life and yours. We reconsidered the contributions he made to our state and nation. We did not smile, and think of him or you as out of date. You would not have been hurt had you been there. We did think your wagon queer, but we sadly thought we had scarcely attained the mental and spiritual stature of your tall son.

No, Mr. Lincoln, we are not extravagant in either our appreciation or our praise, here in Illinois. We have few heroes and fewer idols. You might even think us mercenary, and terribly busy about a multi-



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tude of unnecessary things. But we are not entirely insensible to higher values. We do not altogether forget that it is in the realms of ideals and idealism that we finally live. Many of us are ready all over this vast land of ours, to say that you gave us our greatest gift, a noble son.

After all we remember that back of all progress is mind. Permeating all civilization must be character, inspiring it must be faith. You and your wife must have had that, Mr. Lincoln, for it was the heritage of your son.

And may I ask you to hear this one word more? I shall not follow your son to Washington, to the Presidency; not remind you that he was a seer who saw farther than the prophets of God in his own day; not tell you the fireside commonplace that he freed two races, the slaveholders and the slaves, that he stood adamant, and yet was as tender as his own mother, sleeping yonder in that other grave, must have been. I shall not tell you of his return in his casket, nor of the simple shaft we have erected in his home town. I have just come from that grave. Tens of thousands come each year and quietly look at his simple tomb, and go away better men and Americans. You would be grateful for that. The great men of the world lay wreaths on his sarcophagus, but we common people love and honor him, too.

We have marked his dwelling place, carved his figure and sayings on bronze and stone. We have scanned his every day, and re-read his every word. As said before, we are making a God of one who was so reverent in the presence of Deity. But we have found no evidence of dishonor, or no trace of that which might cause your sleep to be less restful. But the greatest gift, we think, made to our state and nation was your son. Rest on then, in this quiet grave. We would give you a larger part of the soil and state to which you gave so much, did you require it.

An organization of grateful citizens have met here to dedicate an ornamental fence not that you may always be remembered, but "lest we forget." This



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fence is intended to keep no man or child out; not to erect a barrier between you and these common folk who rest near you, or who may come to see your grave. Much less is the fence to keep you in. The tall mountains cannot do that, the prairies and the rivers are helpless. Your free spirit has gone forth to a fairer land and a fuller life. But you will ever walk among us and be an inspiration to us. Therefore, on behalf of the Governor of Illinois, and in grateful appreciation, I accept this act and gift as a worthy tribute and beautiful deed. May our descendants come here, and go, as we have come and shall go, sure that they and we have trod on holy ground.

### WHEN LINCOLN FAILED TO DRAW A CROWD

Hardly more than a year before his nomination for the Presidency Abraham Lincoln, whose deeds now cover millions of pages in the world's historical literature, was so little known to fame that an announced lecture by him drew an audience of only forty persons. Considering this too small a crowd, he refused to speak, and the admission charges were refunded to those who had paid a quarter to hear him.

This incident I find in a letter which was kindly lent to me by Charles B. Ives of Bloomington, who found it among the many papers which came into his possession after the death of the late Capt. J. H. Burnham of Bloomington, one of the founders of the Illinois State Historical Society. The letter was recovered by Captain Burnham from a trunkful of papers which he found at the home of his father in Massachusetts after his parents had died. With it were other letters which he had written during his service with the 33rd Illinois, the "Normal Regiment," during the Civil War.

The letter relating the Lincoln incident was written by Captain Burnham, who was then a student in the Illinois



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State Normal University, to his father the day after Lincoln's nomination. Dated Bloomington, May 19, 1860, it reads in part as follows:

Dear Father,

. . . Yesterday noon news came of the nomination of Lincoln. For a time we did not believe it, for we all thought here that Seward stood the best chance, though the Ill. Republicans have worked *desperately* for the "Old Rail Splitter" as they call him, but didn't suppose the eastern delegates would back down so easily. They (the Ill. Dels.) have learned to stick to a man through thick and thin; from the example of Douglas' friends.

Well, perhaps, you never heard much about this Abe Lincoln as he never did anything out of this State.

In the first place he is as honest a man as Honest John Davis, or old Harrison.

In the second place he is the *homeliest* man and the *awkwardest* man in the Sucker State. In the third place he can tell a story better than any man in Ill., and probably better than any other man in the world, and these are the only qualifications he has which are at all superior to others in the Republican party. He is a powerful lawyer, and honest at that, has practiced all over the state, and is immensely popular in this state, and will give Douglas himself a tremendous hard pull. Last night there were bonfires on all the principal street corners, and rejoicing till a late hour, and in two or three days there will be a grand Ratification meeting. I have seen Lincoln several times, and heard him speak once. His popularity as a speaker consists in joking and story telling, and I have heard many better orators. I heard him one year ago on a law case. In the evening he was advertised to lecture on *Invention*, for the benefit of the Ladies Library Association, admittance 25 cts.

I paid a quarter and went early to get a seat. It was a beautiful evening, and the lecture had been well advertised but for some reason not yet explained, only



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about 40 persons were present, and old Abe would not speak to such a small crowd, and they paid us back our quarters at the door. Nobody thought then that he would be the nominee for the Presidency, but I love to tease his friends now about that Lecture that I didn't hear. So much for old Abe. Probably we shall have the hottest fight ever known in this state this fall. The cry is already "Rails, Rails, Rails." But I must close. . . .

Your aff. son,

J. H. BURNHAM.

Although Burnham tells of the failure of Lincoln's lecture on one particular evening, he delivered it successfully on several occasions in 1858, 1859 and 1860.

HARRY E. PRATT.

Illinois Wesleyan University  
Bloomington.



## HISTORICAL NEWS

A bronze statue of Abraham Lincoln, designed by Henry Hering, New York sculptor, was dedicated in Indianapolis on December 29, 1934. The statue, which was made possible by a bequest of Henry C. Long of Indianapolis thirty-four years ago, is located in University Park, just south of the World War Memorial. Lincoln is shown as a seated figure, with his right hand upraised as if he were asking for the continued confidence of the people during the trying days of civil war.

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On February 6, 1935, the State of Illinois acquired the old Logan County court house at Mt. Pulaski, one of the two remaining Illinois court houses in which Abraham Lincoln regularly practised law. Like the Lincoln Home and other similar structures now owned by the state, the Mt. Pulaski court house will be restored to its original condition and maintained as a Lincoln memorial.

By popular vote the county seat of Logan County was removed from Postville to Mt. Pulaski in 1848. The people set out at once to raise the money for a court house. Popular subscriptions totalled \$2,700, to which the county added \$300. With this the present structure was built.

In those days courts were held for short intervals in the spring and fall. Most of the lawyers were residents of other towns who regularly attended all the courts of a given judicial circuit. Among those who thus visited Mt. Pulaski the most prominent was Abraham Lincoln, but David Davis was the presiding judge, and William H. Herndon, Stephen T. Logan and others of note were frequent visitors.



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No sooner was Mt. Pulaski selected as the county seat than agitation for a change developed among the residents of the northern part of the county, who complained of the distance which they were compelled to travel to transact county business. By popular vote the county seat was again changed, and in 1855 the records were removed to the newly founded town of Lincoln.

In recent years the Mt. Pulaski court house has been used as a postoffice and as the headquarters for the American Legion. In the near future both tenants will vacate, and the building will be restored to its original condition.

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An unusual little volume entitled *If Lincoln Had Lived* came from the University of Chicago Press on February 12th. Issued to commemorate the University of Chicago's acquisition of the Barton Lincoln collection, it consists of the addresses delivered on April 20, 1934, when the collection was dedicated, by M. Llewellyn Raney, Lloyd Lewis, Carl Sandburg and William E. Dodd, together with a letter from Governor Henry Horner.

The book takes its title from Lloyd Lewis's paper, in which the argument is advanced that if Lincoln had lived the tragic excesses of reconstruction would have been avoided, and a calmer, saner direction given to the nation's development. In the twenty small pages of this essay the reader will find more good sense and sound scholarship than he usually meets with in articles many time as long.

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Among recent publications reaching the desk of the editor is one of more than passing interest to Illinois—*From Canoe to Steel Barge on the Upper Mississippi*, by Mildred L. Hartsough, published by the University of Minnesota Press. Written in popular style, but accurately withal, the book traces the development of traffic on the Upper Mississippi from the days of its discovery by Mar-



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quette and Jolliet to the barge traffic of the year 1934. A bibliography and numerous interesting illustrations are included.

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At the age of ninety-two, Mr. W. R. Eddington of Brighton, Illinois, has written and published, in mimeographed form, an account of his life, and especially of his experiences in the Civil War. The author enlisted as a private at Bunker Hill on August 7, 1862, was assigned to the 97th Illinois Volunteer Infantry, was elected fifth sergeant of his company at Camp Butler, and emerged from the war with the rank of lieutenant. The 97th Illinois saw some of the hardest fighting of the war, with the result that when the regiment was mustered out, only thirty-five men of Eddington's original company remained. Mr. Eddington's account of these stirring years is both interesting and valuable.

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A genealogy of more than ordinary interest is *A History of the Messenger Family and Genealogy of the Ancestry and Descendants of John Messenger and His Wife Anne Lyon Messenger*, recently compiled by Estelle Messenger Harrington of St. Louis. John Messenger was one of the earlier American settlers in Illinois, having established himself at Ridge Prairie in St. Clair County in 1802. Mrs. Harrington has included much material illustrative of early life in Illinois, which gives her book broader interest than usually attaches to a genealogical compilation.

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The Augustana Historical Society has issued its Publication No. 4—*Early Life of Eric Norelius (1833-1862): Journal of a Swedish Immigrant in the Middle West*, translated by Emeroy Johnson. These memoirs of a famous Swedish-American preacher were translated and published



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serially in *The Lutheran Companion*. Their publication aroused so much interest that the Augustana Book Concern of Rock Island joined with the Augustana Historical Society in making them available in book form.

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Williamson County and the city of Marion, the county seat, will both be one hundred years old in 1939. Plans are already being made for the suitable observance of the anniversary, and it is likely that a centennial committee will be formed in the near future. The preparation of an accurate, detailed history of the county, to be published in 1939, is being discussed. A more appropriate means of signalizing the completion of the first century cannot be found.

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The Moultrie County Historical Society has formed a permanent organization with Glenn M. Kilby as President, Mrs. Grace Richardson as secretary-treasurer, and Albert Walker custodian of records. More than twenty persons have joined the society, and the membership list is increasing steadily.

As one of its first activities the society is sponsoring an essay contest, for which four cash prizes totalling \$10.00 will be awarded. Manuscripts are not to exceed 2,000 words in length, and any person can submit papers on as many subjects as he chooses. Originality, accuracy, and literary values will be the determining factors in awarding prizes.

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We are happy to note the publication, by the U. S. Department of State, of Volumes Two and Three of *The Territorial Papers of the United States*. A preliminary printing of Volume One has also been made, but Volume One in final form will not be issued until the balance of the series has been completed.



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These volumes are the first fruits of an enterprise undertaken in 1926. Prior to that time the territorial papers, scattered among several departments and bureaus of the federal government, were largely inaccessible, and unavailable to students unless one was able to reside in Washington for a long period. Recognizing the great historical importance of these papers, Congress in 1925 authorized the Secretary of State to collect, transcribe and edit them for publication.

In 1926 Dr. Newton D. Mereness commenced the work, but in 1928 the original appropriation lapsed, and the project was temporarily abandoned. In 1929 continuation was authorized by Congress, and in 1931 Dr. Clarence E. Carter of Miami University was appointed as editor. As co-editor, with Clarence W. Alvord, of three volumes of the Illinois Historical Collections, Doctor Carter needs no introduction to students of Illinois history.

The scope of the series and the principles of selections are set forth in the editor's introduction, which is to be found in the preliminary printing of Volume One. Volumes Two and Three are devoted to the Northwest Territory, and contain many documents, hitherto unpublished, relating to the Illinois country between the years of 1787 and 1802. It is apparent that *The Territorial Papers of the United States* will be a valuable source collection for Illinois history, as well as a major contribution to the history of the nation.

The law authorizing the publication of the *Territorial Papers* provides for the distribution of free copies to a small number of libraries only. Individuals and libraries not receiving copies under the law can obtain the publication from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.



## CONTRIBUTORS

Harry E. Pratt, who edits John D. Caton's Chicago reminiscences and contributes one of the Historical Notes to this issue, is a member of the history faculty of Illinois Wesleyan University at Bloomington. Charles G. Davis, of Cambridge, is judge of the Henry County Court. Ernest E. East is a member of the staff of the Peoria *Journal-Transcript* and secretary of the Peoria Historical Society. Bruce W. Merwin is a member of the faculty of the Southern Illinois State Normal University at Carbondale.







# THE NORTHERN CROSS RAILROAD

*By*

*H. J. STRATTON*

The Northern Cross Railroad deserves a more important place in railroad history than it has been accorded. It was the first railroad upon which a steam locomotive operated in the entire area west of the Allegheny Mountains and north of the Ohio River. Meredosia, Illinois, on the Illinois River, and Springfield, Illinois, the newly designated capital of the state, were the terminal points. Jacksonville, Illinois, was the most important point on the route and was the center for much of the construction activity.

Illinois has reason to be proud of her priority in railroad construction over the entire Middle West. She can lay claim to the possession of imagination and daring. Illinois also has reason to be ashamed of this chapter of her history, for closer inspection reveals that her imagination was closely concerned with sectional selfishness, and her daring bordered on recklessness.

## BACKGROUND OF RAILROAD CONDITIONS

In considering this first episode in Illinois and middle-western railroad history it is advisable to remind ourselves of the status of railroad development in the country at large. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad opened its first section for traffic on May 22, 1830, and in 1831 used steam propulsion in an experimental way. The Mohawk and Hudson (later the New York Central) was finished for traffic be-



## THE NORTHERN CROSS RAILROAD

tween Albany and Schenectady in 1831 and was the second continuous section of railroad line operated by steam in the United States. On it the third locomotive built in the United States, the "De Witt Clinton," was run.<sup>1</sup> The first locomotive built in the United States, the "Best Friend" of Charleston, made its first trip on November 2, 1830. The second locomotive, the "West Point," was put into service on March 5, 1831.<sup>2</sup> The State of Pennsylvania built a railroad and opened it in 1834, using both steam and horse power.<sup>3</sup> On November 8, 1838, eight miles of track on the Northern Cross Railroad were completely laid and a locomotive made a trial trip with appropriate ceremony.<sup>4</sup>

Thus it is evident that Illinois began her railroad history almost as soon as the richer and more populous eastern states. Illinois was not alone, however, among middle-western states. One writer has said that the whole region from the western slope of the Alleghenies to the Mississippi River was a vast incubator for railroad schemes.<sup>5</sup> Illinois assumed importance mainly because of the ambitiousness of her railroad projects and the slight priority of one of them over those of neighboring states.

A table of railroads completed and in progress in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, and Illinois in the summer of 1839 was compiled by Chevalier De Gerstner. He found that in these four states there were thirteen locomotives operating on about one hundred and forty miles of track. Illinois was credited with two locomotives and sixteen miles of track.<sup>6</sup> The first locomotive that operated in the Middle West (in the fall of 1838) was, therefore, joined by twelve others before a year and a half had elapsed. This illus-

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<sup>1</sup>John Moody, *The Railroad Builders* (New Haven, 1919), p. 21.

<sup>2</sup>Charles F. Carter, *When Railroads Were New* (New York, 1909), pp. 24-26.

<sup>3</sup>Moody, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

<sup>4</sup>J. L. Conger, *History of the Illinois River Valley* (Chicago, 1932), I, 265.

<sup>5</sup>Carter, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

<sup>6</sup>*American Railroad Journal*, XI, or New Series V, (July-December, 1840), p. 365.



trates how rapidly the so-called "incubator" railroads were hatching.

So much for the chronology of railroad development. What of the popular attitudes and impressions concerning this interesting and ultimately revolutionary change in transportation methods? A controversy has raged, with greater or less violence, for a century between exponents of canals and other artificial waterways and exponents of railroads. The controversy was never as bitter, and the sides were never as well matched, as in the thirties. One writer says that "In the minds of most men down to about 1830, the canal was the beau ideal of perfected transportation."<sup>7</sup> During the decade, however, public favor swung around toward railroads, despite the opposition of those who had economic or intellectual reasons for remaining loyal to the older form of transportation.

A brief statement by Governor Duncan of Illinois, made in 1834, provides a good summary of the arguments of the canalites. He said, "In my judgment, experience has shown canals to be much more useful and generally cheaper of construction than railroads; they require less expensive repairs, and are continually improving; while railroads are kept in repair at heavy expense, and will last but about fifteen years."<sup>8</sup>

The reports of the two rival committees in the Illinois Senate, the Committee on Canals and Canal Lands, and the Committee on Internal Improvement, often afforded interesting and amusing conflicts of opinion. For example, the two committees reported in January of 1841. The Canal Committee asserted that "time has tested railroads and canals and public judgment has decided in favor of canals." They further stated that "the Committee have no difficulty

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<sup>7</sup>Louis Haney, *Congressional History of Railroads in the United States to 1850* (Madison, 1908), p. 220.

<sup>8</sup>William K. Ackerman, "Early Illinois Railroads" (1883), *Fergus Historical Series*, No. 23, p. 12.



## THE NORTHERN CROSS RAILROAD

in coming to a conclusion to prefer canals over railroads, although we know that a few years since, popular opinion inclined to favor railroads, in preference to canals.”<sup>9</sup> They then went on to support their position by logic, fact and assertion.

The Internal Improvement Committee was simultaneously asserting in its report that “the opinions of all scientific and practical men confirm the superiority of railroads over canals, and particularly in a country situated as ours is . . . .”<sup>10</sup>

One ingenious soul with a flair for compromise envisioned a super-transportation system combining railroads and canals. He suggested that tracks be constructed along the canal banks upon which locomotives could be operated in lieu of the patient but plodding mule. With such a system he ventured to say that “we have not the smallest doubt that, ultimately, canal navigation, even in point of expedition and celerity will surpass railroad transportation.”<sup>11</sup>

Within ten years the mechanical progress of railroads put an end to canal building and opened the way for the astonishingly rapid construction of a complete network of trunk line railroads.

A great many interesting episodes and opinions have come down to us from early railroad history but they need not be repeated here. One quotation taken from a Jacksonville, Illinois, newspaper will typify the pseudo-scientific articles on railroads that appeared in the thirties. The writer was a James Johnson, M.D. The article was probably a reprint from an eastern newspaper. Mr. Johnson said: “The steam-shriek is a new phenomenon on the railroad, and a very startling one it is. By opening a small

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<sup>9</sup>*Reports Made To Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Illinois* (Springfield: Public Printer, 1841), Senate Report, 12th Assembly, 2d session (1839), p. 150. Hereafter referred to as *Illinois Reports*.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, Senate Report, 12th, 2d. (1839), p. 166.

<sup>11</sup>*Niles Register*, VII or LVII, October 5, 1839, p. 96, quoting the *Alexandria Gazette*.



valve in the boiler, a volume of steam is driven with tremendous force and velocity, through a narrow aperture, in imitation of a throat, causing a shrill shriek, unlike the voice of man or any known animal but so loud as to be heard two miles off. It is a most unearthly yell, or scream, or whistle (which was compared by a distinguished poet who sat beside me, C. Campbell; to the cry of some monstrous animal while being gored to death). It forms an excellent alarum to clear the road for the train, and apprise those at the station that the engine approaches."<sup>12</sup>

The same commentator wrote professionally of the effect of train riding on the health. "The vibration, or rather oscillatory motion communicated to the human frame . . . equalizes the circulation, promotes digestion, tranquillizes the nerves (after the open country is gained), and often causes sound sleep during the succeeding night. . . . The railroad bids fair to be a powerful remedial agent in many ailments to which the metropolitan and civic inhabitants are subject."<sup>13</sup>

The campaign for safe railroad travel was begun at least as long ago as 1839, when the following warning appeared in a Galena, Illinois, newspaper: "A warning—Let every one who has occasion to travel or jaunt on a railroad read and remember the following caution. All persons, and ladies especially, should be careful to avoid stepping from the railroad cars when they are in motion, however moderate the motion may appear. What seems a slow movement on a railroad is often as rapid as the motion of the quickest stage coach."<sup>14</sup>

In general, however, people seem to have taken the advent of railroads quite calmly. An examination of files of Illinois newspapers contemporary to the first building and

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<sup>12</sup>*Illinois Standard*, April 28, 1838.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup>*Northwestern Gazette and Galena Advertiser*, Aug. 8, 1839.



## THE NORTHERN CROSS RAILROAD

operation of railroads reveals remarkably few references to them. Such comments as did appear dealt usually with the political aspects of railroads. This may have been a defect in the newspaper reporting of that day and a reflection of the prevailing emphasis on politics. It may also be proof that people observe the beginnings of social and economic revolutions without recognizing them as such and without allowing them to make a rift in their absorption in their own personal affairs.

## THE INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT ACT

The Northern Cross Railroad was intended to be a small part of a great system of internal improvements which was to cover the state with a network of railroads and waterways. The project was a bold one for a state that had a population of fewer than three hundred thousand people.<sup>15</sup> It was more than bold; it was foolhardy. Even if the scheme had been carried to completion with the greatest prudence, and operated with the greatest skill, it would have been a colossal failure because it bore no sound relationship to the transportation needs of the time and population.

Today, in a specialized and urbanized age, there are in the United States about twenty-five miles of railroad for every ten thousand people.<sup>16</sup> Under the Internal Improvement Act, 1,342 miles of railroad were projected for about three hundred thousand people.<sup>17</sup> This would have been in the ratio of nearly fifty miles of railroad for every ten thousand people or twice as great a mileage per population unit as we require today with our specialized and interdependent economic organization.

The railroads contemplated were: (1) the Central Rail-

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<sup>15</sup> John Moses, *Illinois, Historical and Statistical* (Chicago, 1889), I, 549.

<sup>16</sup> Stuart Daggett, *Principles of Inland Transportation* (New York, 1928), p. 7.

<sup>17</sup> *Illinois Reports*, House Reports, 11th, 1st (1838). Semi-Annual Reports of Board of Commissioners of Public Works, p. 11 of the Commissioners' Reports.



road from Cairo through Vandalia, Shelbyville, Decatur and Bloomington to a point at or near the southern terminus of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, and from thence via Savannah to Galesburg; (2) the Southern Cross Railroad from Alton to Mt. Carmel via Edwardsville, Carlyle, Salem, Fairfield and Albion, and also a railroad from Alton to Shawneetown to branch off at Edwardsville; (3) the Northern Cross Railroad from Quincy on the Mississippi River via Columbus, Clayton, Mt. Sterling, Meredosia, Jacksonville, Springfield, Decatur, and Danville to the Indiana line; (4) a branch of the Central Railroad to intersect the Central Railroad near Shelbyville and run east to the Indiana line through Paris; (5) a railroad from Peoria through Canton, Macomb, Carthage and Warsaw to the Mississippi River; (6) a railroad from Alton through Hillsboro to the main line of the Central Railroad near Shelbyville; (7) a railroad from Belleville through Lebanon to intersect the Alton and Mt. Carmel Railroad; (8) a railroad from Bloomington to Mackinaw in Tazewell County where it diverged to Peoria on the one hand and through Tremont to Pekin on the other.

Besides the railroad construction, improvements were to be made on the Wabash, Illinois, Rock, Kaskaskia, and Little Wabash rivers and on the Western Mail Route from Vincennes to St. Louis. To round off the program two hundred thousand dollars were appropriated to be divided according to population among the counties which got no internal improvements within their borders.

The total appropriation for these projects was \$10,200,000.<sup>18</sup>

The law providing for these ambitious improvement activities was entitled "An Act to establish and maintain a general system of Internal Improvements." It was passed

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<sup>18</sup>*Laws of Illinois*, 10th General Assembly (1836-37), pp. 132-136.



## THE NORTHERN CROSS RAILROAD

February 27, 1837. The political background of the act has been depicted in numerous histories of early Illinois and need not be reproduced here.

The immediate impetus for the act was a convention held at Vandalia in 1836, in the interest of internal improvement. Stuvé and Davidson said of the convention: "It was an irresponsible body. . . . The wildest reasoning was indulged. . . . Possibilities were argued into probabilities and the latter into infallibilities. Doubts regarding the advantages of the system were scouted; the resources of the State magnified a hundred fold."<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, the convention represented various sections of the state and its resolutions carried weight. They called for a system of internal improvements, embracing the general features of the plan adopted shortly thereafter by the legislature, and recommended the floating of a loan of eight million dollars for the purpose.<sup>20</sup>

A few of the details of the Internal Improvement Act are worthy of mention. The negotiating of the necessary loans was intrusted to a board of three Fund Commissioners, chosen by the legislature. The active direction of the construction work was vested in a board of Commissioners of Public Works consisting of seven members, one representing each judicial district.

The log-rolling and sectional selfishness that were behind the act were apparent in numerous places. The scope of the act was obviously less the result of deliberate decision than the result of an accumulation of log-rolling bargains. The division of the direction of the work among seven different Commissioners of Public Works, each representing a judicial district, was evidence of the spirit of section-

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<sup>19</sup>A. Davidson and Bernard Stuvé, *History of Illinois, 1673 to 1873* (Springfield, 1874), p. 435.

<sup>20</sup>*Illinois Reports*, S. R., 12th (1841), p. 162, report dated January 11, 1841.



alism. The same railroad as it left one judicial district and entered another would come under the supervision of a different Commissioner.

The fear of each section and town that some other section or town would gain an advantage by earlier completion of a railroad was reflected in the provision that the commissioners should commence the different portions of the railroads at their intersections with navigable streams, and progress in both directions, and that they also might, if they thought wise, start railroads at important trading towns. Instead of building trial railroads, completing them, deriving experience from them, and possibly obtaining revenue for further construction the legislature permitted sectional jealousy to dictate. All construction work was begun as nearly simultaneously as possible and carried along at about the same rate. This alone doomed the system before it was begun.

The one exception to the policy of simultaneous construction was the Northern Cross Railroad. The Internal Improvement Act provided that "it shall be the duty of the board of commissioners to contract for the immediate construction, so soon as located, of all the railroads or parts thereof contemplated between Quincy and the Wabash, as lies between Jacksonville in Morgan county, Springfield in Sangamon county, Decatur in Macon county, and Danville in Vermilion county; thence to the state line in Vermilion county in a direction to Lafayette in Indiana, at such point as the commissioners of this State and of Indiana may agree to cross the same."<sup>21</sup> (This was the description of the route of the so-called Northern Cross Railroad.) The reason for starting this railroad ahead of the others was not economic but political. Senator John W. Vance from Vermilion County voted for the Internal Im-

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<sup>21</sup>*Laws of Illinois, op. cit.*, p. 151.



## THE NORTHERN CROSS RAILROAD

provement Bill on the condition that the Northern Cross be the first railroad to be built.<sup>22</sup>

The first railroad safety provision in Illinois was, no doubt, the one contained in this law. It stipulated that "every locomotive engine, passing upon any railroad, shall have attached to the same a bell of not less than twenty-five pounds weight, and the said bell shall always be rung at the distance of at least sixty rods from the place where the said railroad crosses any other railroad, turnpike road, highway or public road, upon the same level with the said railroad, and shall be kept ringing until the engine and its train shall have crossed the said road or way.

"There shall be boards conspicuously put up, and constantly maintained, across each turnpike road and highway . . . in such a position as can be easily seen . . . and on each side of the said boards shall be printed in plain and legible capital letters, of at least the size of nine inches each—RAIL-ROAD CROSSING, LOOK OUT FOR THE ENGINE WHILE THE BELL RINGS."<sup>23</sup>

The panic of 1837 was under way almost before the machinery set up by the law had begun to revolve. The immediate effect was to make it difficult to float state bond issues. The Fund Commissioners persevered, however, and in December, 1838, were able to report that "after many efforts on the part of the commissioners to dispose of a portion of the internal improvement bonds, they succeeded in selling to James Irwin, one thousand bonds of \$1,000 each, to Nicholas Biddle, one thousand bonds, and to Hall and Hudson, one hundred bonds, all of the same denomination, making in all twenty-one hundred thousand dollars (2,100,000) at par." They also sold to Boorman and Johnson one hundred bonds of the same amount at five per

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<sup>22</sup>Ackerman, *Early Illinois Railroads*, p. 100.

<sup>23</sup>*Laws of Illinois, op. cit.*, p. 146.



cent premium.<sup>24</sup> Additional bonds were floated during 1839, but by the end of that year, "the vast amounts of bonds which were so lavishly thrown into the markets, not only by this State, but many others, reduced their price and checked their further negotiation." The total amount of the bonds and scrip issued for internal improvement was \$5,614,196.94 according to Governor Thomas Carlin.<sup>25</sup>

Governor Thomas Ford estimated the bonds and scrip issued for internal improvement at about six million.<sup>26</sup>

The principal result the state had to show for this vast expenditure was the completed segment of the Northern Cross Railroad between Meredosia and Springfield.

Early in 1840, the Board of Public Works met and decided to suspend, as far as possible, all the public works then under construction. Contractors were to be paid for work done, and claims for damages were to be allowed against the state for losses sustained by contractors due to suspension of work.<sup>27</sup> The rest of the political story of the Illinois Internal Improvement venture concerns the problems of paying interest on and liquidating the huge debt that had been piled up, and disposing of the property and supplies. We shall not make that our concern.

## CONSTRUCTION

The surveys for the Northern Cross Railroad were made in the spring of 1837. The section between Jacksonville and Meredosia was in charge of J. M. Bucklin, chief engineer, and William Pollock, assistant engineer. They were delayed in starting their work while Bucklin went East to procure the necessary instruments. He returned about the

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<sup>24</sup>*Illinois Reports*, S. R. 11th, 1st (1838), letter of the Auditor of Public Accounts transmitting a report of the Board of Fund Commissioners.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, S. R., 13th, 1st (1842) pp. 4-7.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, H. R., 12th, 2d (1841), p. 104.



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middle of May, and work was begun the latter part of the same month.

Great difficulty was experienced in finding a good route through the river bluffs east of Meredosia. The stream beds did not run in the direction the railroad would naturally take. The ascent of the bluffs elsewhere was too steep for an engine to negotiate without the expensive expedient of an inclined plane and stationary power. Murray McConnel, commissioner, in a letter dated July 11, 1837, stated: "More than one hundred miles of experimental line [were] surveyed by Mr. Bucklin and the engineers under his charge, with a view to ascertaining the best route for said road. . . . Notwithstanding all these difficulties, notwithstanding the almost constant rains in this part of the country in the month of June, the engineers completed the location of the road between Jacksonville and the river . . . a sufficient time before the tenth of July to enable all persons wishing to make contracts upon said road to obtain all necessary information relative thereto."<sup>28</sup>

Marcus A. Chinn directed the survey of the Jacksonville to Springfield section of the road. By using his own instruments, which were immediately available, he was able to start his crew to work on April 29, 1837. The route chosen was essentially the same as that now followed by the Wabash Railroad. No outstanding difficulties or controversies concerning the location of this section of the road have gotten into the record.

Considerable controversy and scandal centered around the location of the Jacksonville to Meredosia section. Murray McConnel was charged with locating the railroad to the advantage of his own land speculations. After a lengthy hearing on the charges, a joint select committee of the House and Senate found a color of truth in some of the

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<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, S. R., 11th, 1st (1833), Report of the Joint Select Committee to examine the offices of the Fund Commissioners and the Board of Public Works, p. 48 of the committee report.



charges but apparently did not believe that his dereliction from duty was wide enough or clear enough to justify action.<sup>29</sup>

One of the most bitter controversies, and also one of the most amusing to look back upon, concerned the routing of the railroad through Jacksonville. As provided for in the original survey, the tracks would have been laid through the northern outskirts of the village, approximately where they are now. At once the citizens raised a storm of protest. Many of them felt, apparently, that if a railroad was a good thing to have, then the closer it ran to one's own front door or to one's speculative land holdings, the better.

This point of view is reflected in a letter written May 7, 1838: "Our town is in an uproar at present about a railroad that is started at the river twenty miles from here and to go to Springfield thirty-five miles from here. The majority of the people want it through State Street and through the Public Square. But the commissioner wishes to locate it on the outskirts of the town. If he accomplishes his end the town is ruined for business. . . . Business of all kinds has been dull here for some months. We are in hopes of the railroad doing some good for us yet."<sup>30</sup>

A committee of Jacksonville citizens composed of Samuel M. Prosser, Isaac D. Rawlings and James Johnson carried on an exchange of letters with Murray McConnel. Considerable bitterness was manifested by both parties to the argument. The committee asserted in the course of their comments that the road through the square had been recommended by one of the largest public meetings ever held in Jacksonville. McConnel replied that the proposed new route "would pass through one of the most populous streets of the town, through which it is folly to suppose

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<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 1-131.

<sup>30</sup>*Jacksonville Journal*, April 2, 1915; letter of Jane P. Smith quoted by Ensley Moore.



## THE NORTHERN CROSS RAILROAD

that a locomotive can or will be permitted to work. Consequently the state must have an extra locomotive and a number of horses and men to transport passenger and burthen cars through town."<sup>31</sup>

The trustees of the town of Jacksonville fell in promptly with the public will. In their proceedings of May 15, 1838, they stated that the Commissioner of the Board of Public Works had surveyed the railroad to go through the northern part of Jacksonville "to the damage and injury to lots through which it passes and to the disapprobation of citizens as expressed at public meetings." The trustees therefore resolved "that no railroad could be built in Jacksonville unless it ran through the public square and along State Street. Any violation of this ordinance is punishable by a fine of five dollars for every offense."<sup>32</sup>

The protestations of Jacksonville citizenry finally persuaded the Board of Public Works to re-survey the railroad and run it through the public square. Even before the railroad was built and put in operation many of the Jacksonville residents began to regret their victory. In September, 1839, the county commissioners sent a protest to the Board of Public Works saying that they understood that, at the solicitation of the trustees of Jacksonville, the railroad was about to be run through the public square; that they believed such action would be injurious to the people of the county; and that they, therefore, wished to enter a solemn protest against the passage of the Northern Cross Railroad across the public square of Jacksonville.<sup>33</sup>

When actual construction began misgivings increased. An editorial in the *Illinoian* expressed these misgivings. "One thing there is which we regret to see, and that is the large embankment thrown up in one of our principal

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<sup>31</sup>*Illinois Standard*, May 5, 1838.

<sup>32</sup>*Proceedings of Trustees of Town of Jacksonville, Illinois*, May 15, 1838.

<sup>33</sup>Copy of protest signed by J. Heslep, Clerk of the County of Morgan, Sept., 1839. In State Auditor's Office, Springfield, Illinois.



streets for constructing the railroad. However much it may be supposed for the public good, it certainly detracts from the beauty of the place. . . ."<sup>34</sup>

Despite these belated misgivings the railroad was built through the public square and remained there throughout the period of state ownership. It was re-located in the northern part of the town after it passed into private hands.

The manner of constructing the Northern Cross Railroad as well as all the other railroads projected by the Internal Improvement Act, was specified by the act in great detail. The standard contract between the railroad contractors and the Fund Commissioners representing the state called for two parallel lines of mud sills or foundation sills of white burr oak, post oak, walnut or locust, of any convenient size over twelve feet, to be hewn to a thickness of six inches, and to be not less than eight inches wide. Upon these were to be placed cross ties three feet apart from center to center and fastened to them with spikes. Finally, wooden stringers twelve to twenty feet long and six inches square were to be fastened to the cross ties to complete the road bed. Then strap iron rails fifteen feet long, two and a quarter inches wide, and five-eighths of an inch thick were to be spiked to the stringers at a distance of about an inch from the inner edge.<sup>35</sup>

It was common knowledge among engineers, if not among legislators, that the strap rail was not proving satisfactory. In 1832, a construction engineer for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad reported in favor of a type of track for the Washington branch of the road that was very similar to the one in use today. He recommended a heavy iron rail of thirty-two pounds to the yard (as against thirteen pounds in the strap rails used on the Northern Cross).<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>*Illinoian*, Oct. 5, 1839.

<sup>35</sup>Copy of specifications signed by W. B. Lanphier, State Engineer. See materials known as Executive Records in State Archives, Springfield, Illinois.

<sup>36</sup>Haney, *Congressional History of Railroads to 1850*, p. 199.



## THE NORTHERN CROSS RAILROAD

Jonathan Knight, chief engineer of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, whom J. M. Bucklin consulted in 1831, recommended for the projected Illinois and Michigan Railroad, a "T" rail weighing eighty pounds to the yard.<sup>37</sup> Bucklin in turn, passed the recommendation on when, several years later, he became construction engineer on the Northern Cross Railroad. In 1838, he recommended the heavy "H" rail to Murray McConnel.<sup>38</sup>

In the same month of 1838, another engineer, T. B. Ranson, also recommended to McConnel the "H" rail to be laid directly on cross ties, thus dispensing entirely with the longitudinal wooden "stringers."<sup>39</sup>

William Kinney, president of the Board of Public Works, included in a report to the House of Representatives a recommendation that the Internal Improvement Act be altered to permit the use of a heavy "T" or "H" rail.<sup>40</sup>

Despite these recommendations to the contrary, the light strap rail was used exclusively. Its cheapness was, no doubt, its chief merit in the eyes of the legislators. The unwisdom of their choice was soon to be revealed by the rapid depreciation of the road bed of the Northern Cross Railroad. Further evidence on the same point was forthcoming when the state attempted to dispose of surplus quantities of rails which remained on their hands after they had stopped work on the state railroad system. Governor Ford reported at that time, 1843, that "there was but one railroad in the United States, on which such iron was used; and this was in the State of Michigan."<sup>41</sup>

The fact that in 1843, about six years after the Illinois

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<sup>37</sup>Ackerman, "Early Illinois Railroads," p. 10, quoting a letter of Bucklin which appeared in the *Railroad Age* of Feb. 21, 1878.

<sup>38</sup>*Illinois Reports*, H. R., 11th, 1st (1838), p. 32 of the semi-annual reports of the Commissioners of Public Works.

<sup>39</sup>*Book of Estimates and Letters of Internal Improvement Office* (Springfield, State Auditor's Office), p. 205.

<sup>40</sup>Letter of Kinney to the Illinois House of Representatives dated Feb. 1, 1839. See Executive Records in State Archives.

<sup>41</sup>*Illinois Reports*, S. R., 14th, 1st (1843), p. 148.



railroad system was planned, only one railroad in the whole country was using the strap rail does not reflect much credit on the administrative or engineering ability of the legislature and its advisers.

The gauge of the Northern Cross was four feet, nine inches—the standard width, as nearly as there was a standard width at that time. This was the result of the assumption of authority by engineer J. M. Bucklin. The Internal Improvement Law called for a width of four feet, eight inches. Bucklin, as he said, “obeying the spirit of the law, laid it four feet, nine inches, that being the general width of roads in the United States.”<sup>42</sup>

The contracts for the construction of the Northern Cross were awarded on the tenth of July, 1837, to a group of men consisting of Myron Leslie, James Dunlap, Thomas T. January, and Charles Collins. Their bids averaged a little over eight thousand dollars a mile for the total distance of slightly over fifty-seven miles. They agreed to begin work by August 1, 1837, to furnish locomotives and cars ready for use at cost delivered on the road, and to accept state bonds or warrants in payment for their work in case the state was not prepared to pay cash.<sup>43</sup>

Construction work got under way promptly. “Ground was first broken in Meredosia . . . with great ceremony and in the presence of a vast concourse of citizens. Speeches were made by Mr. J. E. Waldo and Hon. O. M. Long. Mr. Daniel Waldo was selected to dig the first shovelful of dirt, which he did amidst the shouts of the multitude. This labor so exhausted himself and the multitude that no more work was done that day.”<sup>44</sup>

The contractors advertised in the *Illinois Patriot* of July

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<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, H. R., 11th, 1st (1838), p. 32 of semi-annual report of Board of Public Works.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, S. R., 11th, 1st (1838), pp. 48-49 of report of Joint Select Committee.

<sup>44</sup>Charles M. Eames, *Historic Morgan and Classic Jacksonville* (Jacksonville, Ill., 1885), p. 105.



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20, 1837 for "one thousand, good sober and industrious hands to work on . . . the Northern Cross at twenty dollars a month and board."<sup>45</sup>

Payment by the state was equally prompt—at least for a while. A voucher dated October 18, 1837, showed a payment of \$5,097.37 ½ to January, Dunlap and Company for work done. In November a further payment of \$5,597.84 was made; in December a payment of \$5,270.00; in January of 1838, \$13,899.56; in February, \$1,737.60; in March, \$8,300.30; in April, \$22,968.15; in May, \$37,598.47; in June, none; in July, \$37,534.50; in August, \$55,508.33; in September, \$27,038.16; in October, \$25,102.62; in November, \$47,513.64; in December, \$22,183.85; in January of 1839, \$6,018.46.<sup>46</sup>

As the foregoing figures indicate, the construction work progressed steadily even during the winter months. By September, 1837, over six thousand cubic yards of dirt had been excavated, and over fourteen thousand had been thrown up in embankments. About two miles of road-bed was graded ready for the superstructure. By December, 1838, about a year and a quarter after the work began, grading was practically completed between Meredosia and Jacksonville and lacked only eight miles of completion between Jacksonville and Springfield.<sup>47</sup>

Work on the superstructure kept pace with the grading. The first timber was put down in January, 1838. Twelve thousand lineal feet of mud sills were laid and on these one thousand cross ties. In February the first longitudinal sills or stringers were laid, and more than a mile of road was made ready for the iron rails.<sup>48</sup>

The first railroad iron, including rails, spikes, and join-

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<sup>45</sup>*Illinois Patriot* (Jacksonville, Ill.), July 20, 1837.

<sup>46</sup>*Illinois Reports*, S. R., 11th, 1st (1838), pp. 6-22 of Abstracts of Disbursements by Commissioners of Public Works.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, H. R., 11th, 1st (1838), p. 21 of semi-annual report of Board of Public Works.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 70.



ing plates, was shipped from England early in 1838, arriving in Illinois in the spring. "On the 9th of May, 1838, the first rail was laid at Meredosia. . . ." <sup>49</sup> Vouchers in June and July, 1838, carried items of \$1,521.20 and \$1,580.99 respectively for freight on railroad iron. The shipments came by ocean to New Orleans, were shipped by the Mississippi River to St. Louis, and were transshipped up the Illinois River to Meredosia. <sup>50</sup>

In laying the rails, difficulty was experienced with the spikes. Bucklin reported that these were of very poor quality and that, since the cost of working them over so that they would be satisfactory would be greater than buying new ones, he had discarded them. <sup>51</sup>

By December, 1838, McConnel was able to report to the Board of Public Works that "several miles of road from Meredosia are entirely completed. . . ." <sup>52</sup> The line of rails continued to advance toward Jacksonville, until by July of 1839 they reached the half-way point at Morgan City. <sup>53</sup> By the end of the year the entire twenty-four miles between Meredosia and Jacksonville had been completed. <sup>54</sup>

Late in 1839 funds for internal improvement work began to grow scarcer and scarcer as bonds became increasingly difficult and finally impossible to sell. Pay to the contractors got into arrears, and one by one they suspended the work they had in progress. A legislative act of Feb. 1, 1840, instructed the Board of Public Works to pay the contractors for work done and to allow them to make claims against the state for losses suffered through the suspension of construction. <sup>55</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Charles M. Eames, *Historic Morgan and Classic Jacksonville*, p. 105.

<sup>50</sup>*Illinois Reports*, S. R., 11th, 1st (1838), pp. 6-22 of Abstracts of Disbursements by Commissioners of Public Works.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, H. R., 11th, 1st (1838), p. 32 of semi-annual report of Board of Public Works.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, 11th, 2d, p. 160.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, S. R., 11th, 2d (1839), p. 229.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, H. R., 12th, 2d (1841), p. 108.



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By December of 1840 all railroad building in the state with two minor exceptions, had been suspended.<sup>56</sup> Work on the Northern Cross was suspended in March, 1840.<sup>57</sup> The contracting firm of January and Dunlap was awarded damages of \$15,000.<sup>58</sup>

In spite of the prostrate finances of the young state, the staunch friends of internal improvements urged that unless some project was brought to completion all the money already spent would be lost. Their urging resulted in an act for the completion of the Northern Cross Railroad between Jacksonville and Springfield, which went into effect Feb. 27, 1841.<sup>59</sup> One hundred canal bonds of thousand dollar denomination were diverted to the purpose. Bids were advertised at once, and in late March the contract was let to a group of men composed of John Duff, John A. Keedy, John Taylor and Marvellous Eastham. They were to finish by December of the same year the unfinished sections of the railroad between Jacksonville and Springfield.<sup>60</sup> The specifications were practically identical with the ones governing the original construction of a few years before. In addition to the superstructure and track, a turning table for locomotives was called for, and three watering places with vessels of one thousand gallon capacity.<sup>61</sup>

The contracting firm agreed to do the necessary work to complete the road to Springfield for eighty-nine of the thousand-dollar canal bonds. Later, six more bonds were given them in consideration for a change from tressle work to embankment and stone in the bridging of the Brier Fork

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<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 109.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 319.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 145.

<sup>59</sup>*Laws of Illinois*, 12th General Assembly (1840-41), p. 199.

<sup>60</sup>*Illinois State Register*, Apr. 2, 1841; *Illinois Reports*, S. R., 13th, 1st (1842), p. 76.

<sup>61</sup>Copy of specifications governing contractors, see files known as Executive Records in Illinois State Archives.



of Mauvaisterre Creek. This was probably the only project of the whole internal improvement system that was let and constructed for less than the estimates of the state engineers. In December of 1840 it was estimated that the cost of completing the Jacksonville to Springfield section of the Northern Cross would be \$135,000. In 1842 the work was done for \$95,000—not in cash, but in state bonds which had an extremely poor market at the time.<sup>62</sup>

With the necessary materials already at hand and with the experience of the preceding few years as a teacher, the work was pushed to completion between April 1841, and February, 1842. On February 15, 1842, a locomotive entered Springfield, although the track was not completed all the way to the center of town.<sup>63</sup>

### CONSTRUCTION COST

The correlation between estimates of cost and actual cost of public works is notoriously bad. The construction of the Northern Cross Railroad was characterized by unusually wide discrepancies. These errors in engineering estimates of cost may be excused partially on the ground that railroad building was a very new thing, and reliable precedents and parallels were lacking.

The original estimate of cost for the Meredosia to Jacksonville division of the railroad, as reported by J. M. Bucklin in July, 1837, was \$246,215.90.<sup>64</sup> Three estimates for the Jacksonville to Springfield division were made about the same time by M. A. Chinn. They ranged from \$298,113.18 to \$324,035.76. The range was accounted for by minor differences in the manner of construction called for by alternative specifications.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>62</sup>*Illinois Reports*, S. R., 12th, 2d (1841), p. 319.

<sup>63</sup>*Illinois State Register*, Feb. 18, 1842.

<sup>64</sup>*Illinois Reports*, S. R., 11th, 1st (1838), p. 51 of report of Joint Select Committee.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 55.



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The final cost of the first division was \$396,000.00 excluding equipment, depots and right of way.<sup>66</sup>

The entire cost, including locomotives, cars, depots, engine houses, right of way, etc. was \$436,233.<sup>67</sup> Some of these latter expenses, notably the rolling stock, were not fairly attributed to this section of the road alone.

The final cost of the division of the railroad connecting Jacksonville and Springfield was about \$397,000, of which \$95,000 was paid in state bonds. In addition, January & Dunlap, original contractors, were paid \$15,000 for the abandonment of their contract and for the damage they supposedly suffered in not being allowed to complete it.<sup>68</sup> The total cost of construction, therefore, of the fifty-five and seven-tenths miles of railroad between Meredosia and Springfield was about \$800,000, or approximately \$14,500 per mile. This was very bad estimating indeed on the part of the engineers, since the final cost was about forty per cent higher than the estimates.

The cost of the Northern Cross Railroad was undoubtedly excessive. A table of costs of railroad construction in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and Illinois was made on the basis of data collected in August and September of 1839. The costs ranged between \$7,000 and \$12,000 per mile.<sup>69</sup> Some of these costs undoubtedly were preliminary and later proved to be underestimates, since very few railroads in this section of the country had been completed at this date. The State of North Carolina built a railroad about the same time that Illinois was building the Northern Cross. Conditions of construction were probably as difficult as in Illinois, yet the cost per mile was only a little over \$10,000.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*, S. R., 11th, 2d (1839), p. 427.

<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*, H. R., 11th, 2d (1839), p. 329.

<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.*, S. R., 12th, 2d (1841), p. 319.

<sup>69</sup>*American Railroad Journal*, XI or New Series V (July-Dec., 1840), p. 365.

<sup>70</sup>C. K. Brown, *State Movements in Railroad Development*.



## NAPLES BRANCH

Shortly before the Internal Improvement Act was passed in 1837, there was a wave of enthusiasm for railroad construction by private enterprise. Usually the projects did not get past the chartering stage.

One venture, slightly more vigorous than the rest, was the Naples and Jacksonville Railroad Company. Some construction work was actually done from Naples in the direction of Jacksonville in 1836, but the road never got farther than the Illinois River bluffs. It used wooden rails and horse power.<sup>71</sup>

This short stretch of pioneer railroad assumed importance only as it complicated matters for the state project that was initiated soon afterward.

Although construction work on the railroad was done in 1836, the charter was not granted until February 18, 1837, only nine days before the Internal Improvement Act was passed. John Manchester, Horatio N. Manning, Myron Leslie, Bezaleel Gillett and Charles Collins were named as incorporators. They were empowered to build a railroad from the town of Naples up Wolf Run to Jacksonville upon the "most eligible and proper route. . . ."<sup>72</sup> Work was to be commenced within a year and completed within five years provided that "the portion of a rail-road now completed, beginning at said Naples on the route aforesaid, shall be taken and deemed to be a commencement of the work within the meaning of this act."<sup>73</sup>

In the summer of the next year work was begun on the Northern Cross from Meredosia to Jacksonville. Not long afterward the directors of the Naples and Jacksonville Railroad (which had shown no signs of life since its initial spurt of construction work) protested that their charter

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<sup>71</sup>Moses, *Illinois Historical and Statistical*, II, 1043; *Illinois Reports*, S. R., 11th, 1st (1838), pp. 39-40 of report of Joint Select Committee.

<sup>72</sup>*Incorporation Laws of Illinois*, 10th General Assembly (1836-1837), p. 47.

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 51.



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rights were being violated. It was never very clear in the hearing held on this and allied matters by a select committee of the House and Senate, in what manner these charter rights were infringed upon. True, the Northern Cross ran through the valley of Wolf Run, and this valley was specifically mentioned in the Naples and Jacksonville charter. On the other hand, the law of incorporation of that road stated that "the legislature reserves the right to alter, amend, or repeal this act whenever the public good shall require it. . . ." <sup>74</sup>

Whatever the validity of the claims of charter violation, the Commissioners of Public Works were apparently impressed by them. They may be allowed to state their own reasoning. On June 6, 1838, they adopted a resolution saying in part that "whereas the committee from the town of Naples, in Morgan County has presented the application of the inhabitants thereof for a lateral branch to said town from the Northern Cross Railroad . . . [and] that it is to the advantage of the State to extend said branch to the town; and whereas it has been further ascertained that the Jacksonville and Naples Railroad Company has the power by law to make a railroad from the town of Naples to Jacksonville through Wolf Run; and that the Northern Cross State Railroad has been located and is now nearly completed over the same ground; and that said company has not relinquished their right to occupy the same ground; and whereas it has been ascertained that the citizens of said town will construct said road at the bare cost of the work and materials, and that the Naples Railroad Company will relinquish all claim to the State of Illinois without any compensation whatever; It is therefore, Ordered by the Board of Public Works that . . . the engineers . . . locate said lateral branch . . . and put the same under contract. . . ." <sup>75</sup>

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<sup>74</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup>*Illinois Reports*, S. R., 11th, 1st (1838), pp. 66-67 of report of Joint Select Committee.



A contract for the lateral branch to Naples was signed on the fifteenth of August, 1838, with Charles Collins and Myron Leslie (who were prime movers in the Naples Railroad). The contract stipulated (1) that all rights of the owners of the Naples and Jacksonville Railroad were to be given up without cost to the state; (2) that the contractors donate land for terminals and a depot in Naples; (3) that the lateral branch be built over the route already located and partially constructed by the Naples Railroad; (4) that the contractors be paid for the work yet to be done at a rate to be estimated in advance by the state engineers and to be revised downward as the work progressed, if found to be too high.<sup>76</sup>

Work was begun promptly. By the end of October, Leslie and Collins had made 2,400 cubic yards of excavation and 12,378 cubic yards of embankment; had put in masonry to the extent of 72 perches (25 cubic feet per perch); had put in 16,195 feet of mud sills, 6,124 cross ties, and 23,295 lineal feet of longitudinal sills. The total net estimate of the cost of the work was \$13,039.82. Further disbursements were made through the winter of 1838 and early spring of 1839.<sup>77</sup>

On March 2, 1839, an act was passed by the General Assembly providing for the abandonment of the Naples branch of the Northern Cross and taking measures to secure the road-bed and materials from waste and injury.<sup>78</sup>

The total expenditure up to the time of its abandonment was about \$22,000.<sup>79</sup> The cost of building the branch, as estimated beforehand by J. M. Bucklin, was \$36,542, and by Francis G. Murray, \$28,330.<sup>80</sup> A comparison of these

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<sup>76</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

<sup>77</sup>*Ibid.*, H. R., 11th, 1st (1838), pp. 70-73 of semi-annual report of the Commissioners of Public Works.

<sup>78</sup>*Laws of Illinois*, 11th General Assembly (1838-1839), p. 246.

<sup>79</sup>*Illinois Reports*, H. R., 12th, 2d (1840), p. 112.

<sup>80</sup>*Ibid.*, S. R., 11th, 1st (1838), pp. 58 and 65 of report of Joint Select Committee of Investigation.



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estimates with the cost of the work done gives some idea of the state of progress of the railroad when it was abandoned.

### OPERATION OF THE NORTHERN CROSS

The first locomotive for the Northern Cross Railroad arrived in the late fall of 1838 and was put in operation on the few miles of completed track running from Meredosia toward Jacksonville. According to Eames, "the . . . engine was put on [the tracks] in October, set up and on the 8th of November the first puff of a locomotive was heard in the great Mississippi Valley, and the first turn of a wheel made, eight miles of the track were completed, and the first train ran to the extent of the completed track and back, carrying Daniel Waldo, Joseph E. Thompson, Engineer Fields and Joseph Higgins. This trip greatly delighted those interested in the road and so greatly astonished the dwellers along the line that all day wondering crowds of gaping rustics stood and gazed on the 'thing' and wondered what made 'ze wheels go wound'."<sup>81</sup> The engine was originally intended for the Pekin and Bloomington road. As a consequence, it "was heavier than necessary for the light grades on the Northern Cross Railroad."<sup>82</sup> "This locomotive — called the Rogers — was manufactured by Rogers, Grosvenor & Ketchum of Newark, New Jersey."<sup>83</sup> It weighed ten tons.<sup>84</sup>

Freight and passenger cars arrived not long after the locomotive.<sup>85</sup> They proved useful in hauling materials for further construction work and at first were chiefly used for that purpose. This is indicated by the fact that, of the total

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<sup>81</sup>Eames, *Historic Morgan and Classic Jacksonville*, p. 105.

<sup>82</sup>*Illinois Reports*, H. R., 11th, 1st (1838), p. 23 of semi-annual report of Board of Public Works.

<sup>83</sup>Ackerman, *Early Illinois Railroads*, p. 104.

<sup>84</sup>*Illinois Reports*, H. R., 11th, 1st (1838), p. 32 of semi-annual report of Board of Public Works.

<sup>85</sup>File of paid vouchers in Auditor's Office, Springfield, Illinois.



receipts of the railroad up to the end of 1839, the contractors were responsible for about ninety per cent.<sup>86</sup>

"The locomotive and cars first reached Jacksonville in the fall of 1839, and the day was a memorable one. Nearly all Morgan County had, according to accounts, assembled in the public square to witness the arrival of that wonderful first train. School children had been given a holiday and the daily labor was everywhere neglected except in the shops in the town.

"The public square was filled with teams, and when the engine steamed into the square making all the noise possible, there was such a stampede of horses as was never before heard of, nearly every team breaking loose, and at least one-third of the vehicles in the county were broken, and many of the people were as much scared as the horses at the steaming monster as it came rushing into the square."<sup>87</sup>

The equipment was augmented by purchase until in December, 1840, an inventory revealed such items as: one locomotive and tender of Rogers and Company make of Paterson, N. J., one locomotive and tender of Baldwin Company make of Philadelphia, two passenger cars, two baggage cars, and five lumber cars.<sup>88</sup>

In 1843, when the completed railroad was leased to John Taylor, a detailed inventory was included in the lease agreement. Among the interesting and significant items were: two locomotives and tenders, two passenger cars, eight burthen cars, not all in good repair, one turning lathe, one large bellows, one anvil, four pairs of blacksmith's tongs, one sledge hammer, three heading tools, three cast steel turning tools, ten car frames at engine house in Springfield, a lot of castings for burthen cars, one set of car wheels, a lot of plank for car bottoms, one chisel, sixteen mandrills, one

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<sup>86</sup>*Illinois Reports*, S. R., 11th, 2d (1839), p. 229.

<sup>87</sup>Eames, *op. cit.*, p. 104. Ackerman said that the trains were running to Jacksonville by January 1, 1840.

<sup>88</sup>*Letter Book* (Springfield, Ill.: Auditor's Office), p. 425.



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crane, nine cast chisels, five drills, twenty-two axle bars, one pair callipers, one set calking tools, two shop benches, fifty-nine pounds of old coppers, fifteen patterns, one hundred eighty-seven pounds of coupling irons and bolts, eight leather car covers, one coal stove and pipe in passenger car, rope for turning table at Meredosia, engine house at Springfield, pumps and cisterns at watering places, warehouse at Berlin, depot at Morgan City, engine house at Jacksonville, frame engine house south and brick engine house north of road at Meredosia, and warehouse at Berlin.<sup>89</sup>

During the same year, 1843, the value of the buildings erected for the use of the railroad was appraised by the state. The values, estimated by E. Adams and Frederick Doyle, were as follows:<sup>90</sup>

	Original Cost	Present Value
Depot at Meredosia.....	\$12,336.27	\$3,084.00
Engine house and turning table		
at Meredosia .....	6,994.75	1,748.68
Depot at Morgan City.....	5,454.13	1,363.52
		(unfinished)
Engine house and turning table		
at Jacksonville .....	1,463.52	365.88
Berlin depot .....	1,454.17	363.29
Engine house at Springfield.....	3,870.00	(unfinished)
(and four lots)		No estimate.

One of the first, if not the first, railroad advertisements to appear in any Mississippi Valley newspaper was sent out by the Commissioners of Public Works in the early summer of 1839. It stated that "trains of cars will commence running on Monday the 8th instant [July] for the

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<sup>89</sup>Lease agreement between John Taylor and the state, see files known as Executive Records in the State Archives.

<sup>90</sup>Executive Records in State Archives.



transportation of passengers and freight—the cars will arrive at and depart from Meredosia at the hours of 7 o'clock A. M. and 2 o'clock P. M.—returning, the trains will leave Morgan City at the hours of 9 o'clock A. M. and 4 o'clock P. M. In connection with the Railroad, a line of post coaches will run twice every day between Morgan City and Jacksonville, leaving the depot at Morgan City, on the arrival of the trains, and arriving in Jacksonville in time for the passengers to take the daily line, which will run between Jacksonville and Springfield; returning, the coaches will leave Jacksonville after the arrival of the stages from Springfield and reach Morgan City in season for the evening train for Meredosia. Thus the entire distance between Meredosia and Springfield will be readily and pleasantly performed by daylight. Every facility conducive to comfort and convenience will be furnished by the Superintendent of the Railroad—and also by the proprietors of Stage Coaches, and it is hoped that one or more packets may be induced to run daily between St. Louis, Alton and Meredosia. Extensive arrangements will be made for the entertainment of pleasure parties and others desirous of witnessing a Railroad in actual operation. . . .”<sup>91</sup>

Early in 1842 the Northern Cross was completed to Springfield. The *Illinois State Register* announced on Feb. 18, 1842, that “the railroad is now complete to this place. The cars commenced running on Monday last. Large quantities of flour and pork have already been sent on the cars, for the Orleans market, by Opdycke, Tinsley and Co. and some other of our merchants. We think our citizens ought to hold a celebration on account of the opening of the road. The contractors Duff and Co., deserve credit for their perseverance, considering the disadvantages under which they labored, the fall of bonds, etc.”

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<sup>91</sup>*Sangamo Journal*, July 19, 1839.



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The train operated on a leisurely but regular schedule, going from Springfield to Meredosia on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and returning on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The thirty-three and one-half mile trip to Jacksonville was made in a little over two hours. Not satisfied with this rapid travel, a newspaper writer ventured the opinion that the distance could be passed over in an hour and a half. Moreover, he put in an editorial word for a daily round trip which, he said, "would be a great public accommodation."<sup>92</sup>

Steamboats met the cars at Meredosia. The whole trip from Springfield to St. Louis took about twenty-three hours.

During the controversy in 1838 over locating the railroad through the public square of Jacksonville, McConnel, who was opposed to doing so, had said that it was folly to think of running a train through such a populous part of town and that horses would have to be used to draw the cars through town. He was at least partly right. Elaborate safety precautions had to be devised. A traveler on the railroad riding from Meredosia to Jacksonville in March, 1841, described the entry into Jacksonville. "We came by train to this city [Jacksonville] the railroad following what is known as the 'State' road, its tracks being laid down the principal street, the station or stopping place is in the center of the public square. When about a mile or so out of town, the engine, which had been traveling at a tortoise pace was halted and a man got out and preceded the engine on foot—in which style we came through the town, passing the hotel and other house[s] on the main street, going to the 'square' and stopping at the station in the center, much to my amusement."<sup>93</sup>

The appetite of the locomotives seems to have been out

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<sup>92</sup>*Ibid.*, Mar. 18, 1842.

<sup>93</sup>"Diary of Mrs. Isaac L. Morrison," *Journal of Illinois State Historical Society*, VII, No. 1, 49.



of proportion to their speed and pulling power. Watering and wooding stations were placed at frequent intervals. The contract for completing the Jacksonville to Springfield section of the road called for three watering stations in a distance of about thirty-six miles.<sup>94</sup> In the record of miscellaneous expenses frequently such vouchers as this one appear: "to A. B. Reynolds for pumping water from slough for locomotives from April 17, 1841 to August, 1841, sixty-six trips at one dollar per trip."<sup>95</sup> For the period from November 20, 1839 to June 1, 1840 appeared expense items for wood for the locomotive totalling more than eleven hundred dollars.<sup>96</sup>

In order to expedite the re-fueling of the locomotive enroute, the male passengers would frequently join the crew in piling sawed wood into the tender when the train stopped at one of the numerous fueling stations. Or, if the engine ran out of water at a distance from a watering station, the passengers were called upon to carry water from the nearest informal source of supply.<sup>97</sup> The light strap rails proved a prolific source of delay and danger. Besides the possibility of derailing the train, they presented an additional hazard. They came un-spiked at the ends and curled up into so-called "snake heads." If a snake-head pointed toward an approaching train and reared itself high enough to strike the car wheels above center, the end of the rail might be driven up through the floor-board of the train to the alarm and injury of the passengers and crew. A careful engineer would keep a sharp look-out for snake-heads and would stop the train immediately when he saw one, no matter which way it pointed. Then he would

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<sup>94</sup>Executive Records in State Archives Division.

<sup>95</sup>File of paid vouchers among Executive Records in State Archives.

<sup>96</sup>*Illinois Reports*, H. R., 12th, 2d (1840), pp. 332-336.

<sup>97</sup>"Recollections of George McConnel," *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society*, No. 13 (1908), p. 147.



climb out of the engine, hammer and spikes in hand, and spike down the offending rail.

Some of the reminiscences of "snake-head episodes" may have grown in the telling. Samuel A. Willard, in his *Personal Reminiscences*, re-tells two of them. "A snake-head entered a car and shot up between a woman's knees, making a ridiculous mess of her skirts, but she was glad to have escaped deadly hurt. The accidents were often serious. Presco Wright of Springfield, told me that he and a friend were about to start on the same car. While awaiting its coming, the friend said, 'Come, Press, let's go and take our last drink together.' The car had gone but a few miles when a snake-head came up through the floor, struck his friend under the chin, and pushed to his brain, carrying him up bodily, a quivering horror."<sup>98</sup>

Sometimes, the engineer peering ahead for defects in the road bed would discover gaps in the track where several lengths of rails had been removed. The *Sangamo Journal* interpreted these episodes as attempts to wreck the train. The editors noted in their issue of April 8, 1842, that a mile or two east of Morgan City four lengths of rail were removed and that several times previously the same thing had happened.

These acts may not have been attempts to wreck the train, however, but merely thefts. The farmers found numerous uses for the rails in a country and at a time when iron was scarce and costly. They were particularly in demand for sled runners. Governor Thomas Ford spoke of this difficulty in his message to the state assembly in 1846. "If the road remains without repairs and out of use [as it was at the time of his message] the iron will be stolen away from it in less than a year. It has been with very considerable difficulty that the iron on the road could

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<sup>98</sup> "Personal Reminiscences of Samuel Willard, 1830-1850," *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society*, No. 11 (1906), pp. 33-84.



be preserved from being stolen or carried away even during the time when it was in continual use.”<sup>99</sup>

In a letter written not long afterward, Governor Ford reported further on the same matter. “It has been the common practice of certain persons, then unknown, to steal wagon loads of iron off the lower end of the Meredosia railroad; and it seemed to be impossible to detect the thieves. It was agreed by myself and the lessee of the road that we would each pay Mr. Lamborn \$25 to make an effort to detect them. The thieves were detected; one load of iron was taken from them, and a judgment of several hundred dollars in favor of the State was recovered against them by Mr. Lamborn, which was affirmed at the present term of the Supreme Court, and which will be collected, as the bail is amply good. No more iron has been stolen since.”<sup>100</sup>

One act of interference with the operation of the Northern Cross that definitely may be classed as malicious occurred in the summer of 1839. The *Northwestern Gazette and Galena Advertiser* quoted the *Illinoian* concerning the episode: “The Jacksonville *Illinoian* of the 10th says that some villains lately undertook to blow up the bridge over the slough on the railroad near Meredosia. A keg of powder was placed under each end of the bridge and exploded at the same time. The damage sustained did not exceed \$200. But this sum as the editor properly remarks is more than the state can afford to lose at the present time.”<sup>101</sup>

There were enough mechanical interruptions with the operation of this young railroad without malicious acts. The expense vouchers for 1841 and 1842 record repair services of every description and of great frequency. Some-

<sup>99</sup>*Illinois Reports*, S. R., 15th, 1st (1846), pp. 135-136.

<sup>100</sup>*Ibid.*, H. R., p. 348.

<sup>101</sup>*Northwestern Gazette and Galena Advertiser*, Aug. 17, 1839.



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times the engine could not be repaired on the road and was hauled home ignominiously behind teams of horses. In October, 1841, the state incurred a debt of four dollars to Spergin Morefield for "halling engine."<sup>102</sup> Similarly the state was obligated to Joseph Deaton for hauling the locomotive and train of cars from Joseph Henry's to the depot.<sup>103</sup>

On two occasions in 1841 Scott and Neely were paid two dollars and a half for stage fare of the superintendent of the railroad when the cars broke down.<sup>104</sup> It is easy to imagine the sneers and jeers of the conservatives as the locomotive was drawn painfully back to town behind several teams of sturdy horses.

Some examples of the routine repairs and expenses may give an idea to the mechanically-minded of the operating problems of this pioneer road. In May 1842, drawband and belt on chimney of locomotive, \$2.00, A. F. Wilson, Dr.; May 1842, log chain, \$3.98; from October to January 1842, 49 gallons of oil were used costing \$98.00, H. Milburn, Dr.; April 1842, 49 pounds of brass castings, \$30.62; August 17, 1841, to A. B. Reynolds for pumping water from slough for locomotive at one dollar per trip, \$66.00; April 1841, printing eight quires of way bills, \$9.50, and two hundred passenger tickets, \$3.00; April 1841, to Thomas Averitt for firing locomotive for thirty-eight days, \$38.00; to John Tolfree for fifteen gallons of sperm oil, \$26.25. Other repairs involved straightening an axle, altering three hundred spikes, bolts for lumber car, screen for locomotive chimney, new driving wheels for locomotive, mending car steps, fitting two pairs of steps, mending ash pan, etc.<sup>105</sup>

When the Northern Cross was under construction and expenses were mounting rapidly, the sponsors of the project

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<sup>102</sup>File of paid claims in the Executive Records in the State Archives.

<sup>103</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup>*Ibid.*



felt the need of reassuring themselves. To do so, they made an estimate of probable revenue from the railroad when it should be completed from Meredosia to Springfield. They forecasted that passenger traffic would amount to twenty round trips a day which, at six cents a mile, would amount to \$144.00. Freight traffic was calculated on the basis of twenty tons each way at five cents a ton mile making a total daily revenue of about \$120.00. Carriage of United States mail was relied upon for an additional daily amount of \$25.00. Against the estimated daily grand total of revenue of \$289.00 was an estimated daily expense for operation of \$131.00, leaving a daily net operating revenue of \$158.00 or \$47,400 for a three-hundred-day year. This hypothetical return would have afforded a fair return on the capital investment.<sup>106</sup>

The foregoing estimates were not extravagant but the actual revenues did not, at any time, come up to them.

In 1840 the cars were operating between Meredosia and Jacksonville. From June to November of that year the revenue amounted to \$1,774.02. Expenses were \$1,849.82. Superintendent W. H. Delph pointed out in his report, however, that this apparent operating deficit was more than made up by rent accruing from the depot at Meredosia amounting to about \$200.00. He further reported: "I have endeavored to be as economical as possible in the expenditures on the road, and have acted as locomotive engineer and superintendent, but have been compelled to expend about \$600 in clearing out the deep cuts, which, although originally made nineteen feet wide, were continually sliding in during wet weather in the summer, so as to entirely cover the track in some places, and obstruct the passage of the cars."

Concerning the volume of traffic, Delph said that "at

<sup>106</sup>*Illinois Reports*, H. R., 11th, 1st (1838), p. 13 of report of Committee on Internal Improvements.



this time [June 20, 1840] the transportation on the road having in a great measure ceased, I discharged all the hands employed, excepting two, which were retained to keep the road and machinery in order, since which no business of consequence has been done."<sup>107</sup>

During 1841 the revenue, as reported by H. G. Rew, was \$7,060.20. Expense vouchers handed in by Superintendent Rew totaled \$7,433.99. Both revenue and expenses were greater than they were the year before, but the ratio between them was about the same.<sup>108</sup> The banner days of 1841 were those of April and May. On April 19, freight revenues were \$52.67; on April 21, \$53.46; on April 22, \$66.57; on May 3, \$75.85. On no other days than the ones listed were freight revenues as great as fifty dollars (at least from April 19, 1841 to the end of the year and probably at any time during the year).

Passenger revenues for 1841 reached a peak on July 5, with collections of \$70.50 (undoubtedly the result of holiday excursions). Other good days were April 21, \$21.50; June 9, \$25.00; June 16, \$20.25; June 27, \$29.00; July 23, \$30.25; and September 1, \$20.00. Otherwise passenger revenues for that year (after April 19th) never reached twenty dollars.<sup>109</sup>

It was anticipated that when the railroad was completed to Springfield the traffic potentialities of the region would begin to be realized as they had not been before.

For a while the traffic revenue seemed to justify this expectation. The *Illinois State Register* reported: "We learn that the tolls have averaged \$100 per day since the road has been opened, and are expected to increase after the cars make a trip both ways in one day."<sup>110</sup>

<sup>107</sup>*Ibid.*, S. R., 12th, 2d (1840), pp. 50-60.

<sup>108</sup>*Ibid.*, H. R., 13th, 1st (1842), p. 242.

<sup>109</sup>Report of revenue made by Superintendent H. G. Rew, Executive Records in State Archives.

<sup>110</sup>*Illinois State Register*, Mar. 25, 1842.



The *Sangamo Journal* reported in like tone a few weeks later: "The Railroad is doing as fair a business as could be expected, considering the limited means in locomotives and cars under the direction of the superintendents. . . . If we are correctly informed—notwithstanding the heavy loads of produce which are sent off every other day to the river—there is a sufficient amount now in storage in this city, to employ the present means of transportation for three months in carrying it off. Of course there is much complaint of monopoly and favoritism in the present business of transportation—but with what reason we are unable to say."<sup>111</sup>

A detailed report of revenue received for February, March and April of 1842 is to be found in the Illinois State Archives<sup>112</sup> and may be checked against the more general comments of the newspapers. During February the railroad was completed into Springfield, as previously noted. The volume of traffic showed no immediate response. The total freight revenue received during the month amounted to \$394.91. Passenger travel yielded only \$32.00. The more clement weather of March and the impetus of the spring business revival had a marked influence on the railroad. Total freight revenue for the month was \$815.77. Passenger revenue was a close second with a total of \$741. The total revenue for the month was \$1,556.77, a daily average of about \$50 instead of \$100 as reported by the *State Register*.

During April, freight revenues amounted to \$1,195.19, and passenger revenues to \$797.75. This was a total of \$1,992.94, or a daily average of about \$65.

The total revenue received from the first of February to the tenth of June was \$4,838.35.<sup>113</sup> This was a daily aver-

<sup>111</sup>April 8, 1842.

<sup>112</sup>Illinois State Archives, report made by H. G. Rew, ticket and freight agent.

<sup>113</sup>The railroad was leased to private parties in May, 1842. The collections listed up to June 10, 1842, were, no doubt, for freight previously carried.



age of a little less than \$50. (It must be remembered that the railroad operated only six days a week, i.e. three round trips to Meredosia and back. If revenue were figured on the basis of operating days the average would, of course, be somewhat higher.)

If the agreement between H. G. Rew, ticket and freight agent, and Fund Commissioner John D. Whiteside had been carefully kept, the State Archives would now contain valuable source material on earliest Illinois railroad travel. The agreement specified that Rew was to use his office in the Jacksonville Hotel as a ticket office. He was to list the names of all shippers and passengers for every trip and the amount and description of the freight.<sup>114</sup> The passenger list would have been particularly interesting if it had been carefully made every day, but it was not. Frequently the way bill would read "two seats", or "three passengers", or "one stranger." These general appellations may conceal the identity of many famous people who rode on the railroad during its early and brief days of glory.

Many names do appear, but most of them do not signify anything except to the minute reader of early Illinois history. On September 4, 1841, Mr. Dawson rode from Jacksonville to Meredosia paying one dollar for the privilege. On September 10, 1841, there is an entry on the way bill reading merely "Spaulding's School", \$8.50. Since Horace Spaulding was conducting a subscription school in Jacksonville at this time, this sounds like a school excursion, taken for its joint enjoyment and educational value. Mr. Dawson appears to have been an active traveler for his name appears on September 6 for one seat and on September 8 for himself and four other passengers unnamed. On September 22 Mr. Cole appears on the passenger list; on Sept. 24, G. R. Rearick; on Sept. 25, S. T. Logan; on October 11, Mr. Fitzpatrick and two others, Captain Moore

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<sup>114</sup>Copy of contract, State Archives.



and two others and Mr. Collins; on October 12, W. S. Brother; on the same day, Miss Dunlap; on October 13, Mr. T. S. Collins and two and one-half fares with him; on the same day a Mr. Taylor; on October 16, Mr. Shaw and Mr. McCalister; on October 18, Mr. William C. Scott and four other fares; on October 19, Mr. J. P. Wilkinson (?); on October 20, Andrew Russell; on October 21, Samuel Gabraith and one other fare; on October 26, Dr. Morrison, Mr. Crane and Mr. Hoover; on October 27, James Dunlap; on October 28, A. L. Metzler and Captain Moore with four others.

The staple commodities of the time were well represented in the freight listings on the way bills for September and October, 1841. On September 4, Conn and Chambers shipped 41 bushels of wheat from Jacksonville to Meredosia at a cost of \$1.23. During the rest of September and the early part of October they shipped two or three thousand bushels of wheat from Jacksonville to Meredosia. The freight rate was uniformly three cents a bushel. On September 6 the same merchants shipped 15 barrels of flour for \$3.75. On the same day J. E. Mitchell shipped 2,000 staves for \$3.00 and C. Lohr shipped a sack of salt; on September 7 J. C. Zabriskie shipped three trunks to Jacksonville for 50 cents and J. E. Mitchell sent 1,500 staves for \$2.25. On September 8 Conn and Chambers shipped 33 barrels of flour to Meredosia at a cost of 25 cents a barrel.

On September 8 Nathaniel Coffin shipped a load of sand from Meredosia to Jacksonville at a cost of \$5.00, and on the 10th J. Duff shipped a load of sand for \$4.50. On the 11th were shipped two barrels of whiskey for 75 cents. On the 15th G. M. Chambers paid \$2.00 as freight on eight sacks of salt.

Someone, perhaps a new settler, sent over a small lot of furniture from Meredosia to Jacksonville on the 21st of September. On the 22nd James Dunlap received a hun-



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dredweight of bacon by freight at a cost of \$1.50. On the 24th G. M. Chambers received 5 barrels of salt by the way of Meredosia at a cost of 25 cents a barrel. The next day S. M. Chambers received a sack of coffee and a box of figs. On the same train came a lot of leather for G. Hacket.

October 8 saw an influx of empty barrels into Jacksonville. They were received in quantities of one to three by Asa Davenport, S. and G. A. Dunlap, Rev. A. Todd, Isaac D. Rawlings, V. Daniels, A. Buckley, Mr. King, M. Stacy, George Rearick, and Thomas M. Averitt.

On October 15 Conn and Chambers sent away five barrels of eggs at a cost of 25 cents a barrel. G. Rearick received from Meredosia eighteen barrels of salt and a cask of molasses. On the 18th the train took over to Meredosia for T. D. Eames 35 kegs of butter at a freight cost of eight cents a keg and brought back 400 bushels of "cole" for a charge of \$12.00. A few days later ten boxes of boots and shoes arrived to meet the fall demand.<sup>115</sup>

### LEASING AND SALE OF THE NORTHERN CROSS

The Northern Cross had no more than been completed to Springfield when agitation was begun to put it in private hands. Just a little over a month after the railroad began to run to Springfield, the *Sangamo Journal*<sup>116</sup> expressed the hope that the state would lease it. The editor said: "We are every day more and more satisfied that works of this character never ought to be under the control of the State; they are likely to be managed with far less economy in the hands of the State than by private individuals."

The state, weary of its costly role as pioneer railroad builder, responded readily to the pressure of opinion. In May of 1842 a lease was signed with John B. Watson and J. M. Morse. There were a dozen or more bidders for the

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<sup>115</sup>See the collection of way bills in State Archives.

<sup>116</sup>March 25, 1842.



leasing privilege. Their bids ranged from \$200 a year to the \$10,300 offered by the successful bidders.<sup>117</sup>

J. D. Whiteside, Fund Commissioner, explained his action in leasing the railroad in a report to the state senate. "The road having been received [from the contractors] from the expense of keeping it in operation owing to the breaking of locomotives and other fixtures and having to send either to Cincinnati or St. Louis for the principal repairs, I was induced to lease the same to the highest bidder. Accordingly, on the 13th day of May, 1842, Messrs. Watson and Morse became the lessees, agreeing to pay the sum of \$10,300 per annum. After much perseverance, disasters from breakage of machinery and loss to themselves, they surrendered the road to me with its appurtenances."<sup>118</sup>

In July, 1842, S. M. Tinsley and Company (composed of Tinsley, Edmund D. Taylor, William M. Cowgill and John A. Keedy) took up the abandoned lease of Watson and Morse, agreeing to pay \$10,000 a year for four years — \$6,000 in current funds and the remainder in state indebtedness.<sup>119</sup>

In September, 1842, Tinsley and Company gave up their lease, paying one year's rent less deductions for permanent repairs they had made and less a sum to cover the benefits they surrendered in giving up their lease before its expiration.<sup>120</sup>

At this time, the Governor, acting on instructions from the legislature, was attempting to sell the Northern Cross outright. (By an act of March 4, 1843, the legislature had

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<sup>117</sup>List of bids in Executive Records in State Archives.

<sup>118</sup>*Illinois Reports*, S. R., 13th, 1st (1842), p. 77.

<sup>119</sup>What was probably the first railroad rate-regulation scheme laid down by the State of Illinois, was contained in this lease agreement. The lessees agreed not to charge more than ten cents a ton mile for freight, except for dry-goods, way freight, furniture, packages and lumber nor more than five cents a mile for passengers. (See copy of Tinsley lease in Executive Reports in State Archives.)

<sup>120</sup>*Illinois Reports*, H. R., 14th, 1st (1844), p. 147.



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directed the Governor to dispose of the railroad.) In order to do so he asked Tinsley and Company to give up their lease. No bids were immediately forthcoming, however, so a short-time lease was negotiated with John Taylor to run from September 18, 1843, to the following April. The consideration was to be \$2,000.<sup>121</sup>

Operating difficulties did not cease when the state turned over the railroad to private enterprise. By the latter part of 1843 the road and locomotives were in such a condition of disrepair that operation with steam power became increasingly difficult and perilous. The terms of the Taylor lease serve as an index of disrepair. The lessee was to be allowed to use either steam power or horse power. If he used steam he was not to make a speed of more than six miles an hour between Springfield and Jacksonville or more than four miles an hour between Jacksonville and Meredosia (the older section of the road.)<sup>122</sup>

Only a year and a half before, the trip to Jacksonville was made at an average speed exceeding fifteen miles an hour and predictions of a faster schedule were freely made. Now the locomotive was limited to a humiliating six miles an hour while the stage coaches dashed by in a cloud of dust.

It was not long before the locomotives were allowed to go out of use entirely. The recollections of a contemporary were that in 1844 the engines were put out of use, that the cattle guards were floored so that mules could travel on the track and the cars were pulled by three or four mules driven tandem.<sup>123</sup>

When April, 1844, arrived, Taylor was glad to give up his lease. It was taken up at once by Cornelius Ludlum

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<sup>121</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup>Copy of Taylor lease in Executive Records in State Archives.

<sup>123</sup>"Recollections of George McConnel", *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society*, No. 13 (1908), p. 148.



and William D. Baxter at the low figure of \$160 a month for the spring, summer and fall, and a lesser rent to be agreed on for the winter months. Their contract ran until May 1, 1845. They too were to be allowed to use either steam or horse power but their maximum speed with steam was to be five miles an hour between Springfield and Jacksonville and three miles an hour for the remainder of the trip.<sup>124</sup>

Lamb and Company of Meredosia took over the declining railroad for a few months after the expiration of the Ludlum and Baxter lease.<sup>125</sup> In November, 1845, Ludlum and Baxter again assumed charge. This time, no cash rent at all was to be paid but the lessees were to expend \$250 a month in repairs except during the winter months. When the lease expired in September, 1846, no formal agreement was made for the remainder of the year. Ludlum occasionally used the railroad without any stipulated rental.<sup>126</sup>

The Northern Cross had been completed to Springfield only a little over a year when the legislature took formal steps to sell it. An act of March 4, 1843, directed that the property resulting from the internal improvement program be sold.<sup>127</sup> Preparatory to selling the Northern Cross (the only completed railroad of the entire improvement program) a valuation was made in September of 1843. The total value of the road, equipment, depots, engine houses, etc., was put at \$234,515.50.<sup>128</sup> It will be recalled that the original cost incurred only a few years before was about three and one-half times this valuation.

The Governor was authorized to sell the railroad at this valuation but no one came forward to snap up this bargain—a railroad at a fraction of its construction cost. (The

<sup>124</sup>*Illinois Reports*, H. R., 14th, 1st (1844), p. 147.

<sup>125</sup>*Illinois State Register*, May 9, 1845.

<sup>126</sup>*Illinois Reports*, H. R., 15th, 1st (1846), p. 22.

<sup>127</sup>*Ibid.*, S. R., 14th, 1st (1844), p. 4.

<sup>128</sup>*Ibid.*, H. R., p. 149.



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amount was made payable in state indebtedness which was selling below par, so the actual purchase price would have been even less than the valuation figure.)

In December, 1846, the Fund Commissioner advised the legislature to lower the selling price, stating that "I feel authorized to say that the road will not sell at the present valuation and that it will go totally out of use without some very considerable repairs next summer. [At this time Ludlum was leasing the railroad but paying little or nothing and operating it only occasionally.] If the road goes out of use, the iron will be stolen or taken off it before the end of another year. Very great difficulty has existed heretofore, even when the road was in use, and when there were proclamations for rewards in preventing the iron from being stolen."<sup>129</sup>

The legislature promptly adopted the recommendation of the Fund Commissioner to lower their valuation and went him one better by resolving to sell the road to the highest bidder.<sup>130</sup> The act, passed February 16, 1847, provided for sale to the highest bidder of all the Northern Cross Railroad between Springfield and the Illinois River, including depot, engine houses, shop and lots in Springfield, depot and lots in Berlin, frame house in Jacksonville used for offices, engine house and turn table near Jacksonville, depot in Morgan City, engine house, turn table and depot at Meredosia, the ground on which the road was located north of the public square in Jacksonville, the lateral road to Naples, depot in Naples, other appurtenances, locomotives, engines, cars, etc.

The act also provided that the location of the road through Jacksonville was to be changed back to the line north of town as originally surveyed. The entire property was to revert to the state if, within three years, the road was

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<sup>129</sup>*Ibid.*, H. R., 15th, 1st (1846), p. 21.

<sup>130</sup>*Laws of Illinois*, 15th (1846), pp. 109-111.



not put in shape to transport persons and property by force of steam. Profits in excess of six per cent and up to twelve per cent were to be applied on the canal bonds used to complete the railroad. Profits above twelve per cent were to revert to the stockholders.

A quick but unprofitable sale was effected. On April 26, 1847, Nicholas H. Ridgely of Springfield bid in the road for \$21,000.<sup>131</sup> Even taking all factors into consideration this would seem to have been a needless sacrifice of a property which had cost more than three-quarters of a million dollars only a few years before. Even this small sum was, apparently, received in the form of state indebtedness and not cash. The section of the Governor's report dealing with the condition of the state debt listed an amount of debt cancelled of \$21,000 by reason of the sale of railroad.<sup>132</sup>

The State of Michigan experienced an internal improvement fiasco similar to that of Illinois but in selling out to private enterprise they made a much better bargain. Two railroads had been built—the Central and the Southern, the former at a cost of \$2,238,289 and the latter at a cost of \$1,125,590. The Central was sold for two million dollars in state indebtedness and the Southern for five hundred thousand.<sup>133</sup> The blunt words of one writer concerning the Illinois Internal Improvement System seem to have been justified. He said: "That the plan was conceived and executed by incompetent management is plain from the magnitude of the debt incurred, the early failure of the system and the subsequent hasty action of the legislature to undo the acts of only three years previous."<sup>134</sup>

Joel Matteson and possibly others were associated with Ridgely in his purchase. The corporate history of the Wa-

<sup>131</sup>Moses, *Illinois Historical and Statistical*, II, 1045.

<sup>132</sup>*Illinois Reports*, S. R., 16th, 1st (1848), p. 7.

<sup>133</sup>John Million, *State Aid to Railways in Missouri* (University of Chicago Press, 1896), p. 25.

<sup>134</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 222.



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bash Railroad, as prepared by that railroad for the Interstate Commerce Commission,<sup>135</sup> shows that title first passed to Ridgely and Matteson by a deed dated June 30, 1847; that Matteson transferred whatever interest he may have had to Ridgely on July 5, 1847; and that Ridgely sold out to the Sangamon and Morgan Railroad Company on September 24, 1847. (This railroad company was the one created by statute on March 1, 1845, for the specific purpose of taking over the Northern Cross Railroad, if and when a buyer should be found.)<sup>136</sup> The act of 1847 that provided for sale of the railroad to the highest bidder also provided that the purchaser should succeed to the rights and the title of the Sangamon and Morgan Railroad Company.<sup>137</sup>

On July 22, 1849, the re-built railroad was opened for traffic. Two changes had been made in the route—one to take the tracks out of the public square in Jacksonville and lay them through the north part of town as originally surveyed. The other was to make Naples the Illinois River terminal instead of Meredosia.<sup>138</sup> After numerous changes in ownership and name the present Wabash Railroad Company came into existence as the final heir of the original Northern Cross.

Much more railroad iron was contracted for and received than was ever laid down on the internal improvement railroads. Much of the surplus melted away through petty thievery. More than five hundred tons of it were sold to Messrs. Matteson and Bigelow for use on a Michigan state railroad then under construction. According to the statement of Governor Ford this was the only railroad

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<sup>135</sup>The Wabash Railroad sent a copy to the writer.

<sup>136</sup>*Laws of Illinois*, 14th Assembly (1844), p. 150.

<sup>137</sup>15th Assembly (1846), p. 110.

<sup>138</sup>*Ibid.*



in the United States under construction at that time on which the flat rail was being used.<sup>139</sup>

The rails were sold in 1843 for forty-five dollars a ton in state indebtedness. If the remainder of the railroad's assets had been disposed of as successfully the state would have looked back to its internal improvement venture with fewer regrets. The sale had the additional advantage of enabling the state to avoid paying duty on the railroad iron unused. The duty fell due in the fall of 1843 unless the iron was laid on a railroad by that time. The sale was made in time to avoid the payment of duties. Some difficulty was experienced in convincing the federal government of this fact, however. "The iron had been seized for the payment of duties, by the custom house officers at St. Louis and Cincinnati, and was only released by Mr. Matteson, himself, giving bond and security; and by an order of the Secretary of the Treasury."<sup>140</sup>

When mule power was substituted for steam power and the locomotives were allowed to stand idle, the sight of them aroused the inventive imagination of Ex-Senator James Semple. He secured permission from the state to lease the locomotives in order that he might experiment with steam-powered travel on the prairies. The lease, drawn up by Semple and Governor Thomas Ford on January 26, 1846, provided for the leasing of two locomotives "lately used on the Northern Cross Railroad between Springfield and Meredosia," with all their fixtures and appurtenances. The term of the lease was two years and the consideration was twenty dollars a year.<sup>141</sup>

The lease agreement further stated that "the said James Semple has invented a new and improved car calculated to be propelled by steam and to run over the common prai-

<sup>139</sup>*Illinois Reports*, H. R., 14th, 1st (1844), pp. 148-158.

<sup>140</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 148.

<sup>141</sup>*Ibid.*



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rie without the expense of a road, which it is expected will be of great benefit to the State. . . ."

It was provided that if a buyer were found for the Northern Cross he could reclaim the locomotives from Semple as soon as he had put twenty-five miles of railroad in a condition so that locomotives could be used on it.

Semple's steam wagon did succeed in navigating the prairies for a short while but it never became a commercial success. He had dreamed of establishing a freight and passenger line between Alton and Springfield but technical difficulties, apparently, proved greater than he anticipated. He experimented with only one of the two locomotives he contracted for. According to George McConnel, a contemporary, a locomotive was turned over to Semple "near Berlin in the West edge of Sangamon County, where after many strange experiences . . . it was abandoned within a few yards of the railroad track, and gradually went to pieces under the wear of weather and appropriation. . .".<sup>142</sup>

The other locomotive went with the railroad when it was sold to Ridgely in 1847, was rebuilt in the Springfield shops under the supervision of a Mr. Tilton and was renamed the "Phoenix".<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>142</sup>Lease agreement in Executive Records in State Archives.

<sup>143</sup>"Recollections of George McConnel," p. 150.



## STEPHEN A. HURLBUT, 1815-1882

*By*

*JULIET GILMAN SAGER*

In 1845, Belvidere, Illinois, was ten years old. Population probably somewhere about 1,000. Three or four long, lonesome streets, dusty in summer, muddy in spring and fall, choked with snow in winter, and always cluttered up with roaming pigs and cows. Log cabins, frame houses often of hand-hewn boards, a very few stone or brick buildings. A few tiny stores. No sidewalks, no street lamps. Nothing except the most primitive necessities. A raw little prairie settlement with no time yet to think about beauty or ease.

Every other day the four-horse Frink and Walker stage passed through on its way from Chicago to Galena, bringing mail and passengers. One evening in September, 1845, when it stopped as usual at the American House, a good-looking young man got off and went no farther.

He was a Southerner, born and bred in Charleston, S. C., and this was a very Yankee town, settled largely by New Englanders. He was a lawyer, and it must have taken the eye of faith to see any great opportunity for a lawyer here. Besides, three or four other lawyers were already established—W. H. Gilman, the first-comer, James L. Loop, W. L. Burgess, and John C. Kemble. Nevertheless, the new man stayed on, and presently hung out his shingle—"Stephen A. Hurlbut, Atty-at-Law."

Whether he chose this village deliberately, whether he



came by chance and stayed on a whim, nobody knows now.

Belvidere, even in those days, was not a bad choice for a home. The prairie around it was fertile and lovely, the Kishwaukee and its small, winding tributaries as beautiful as any little rivers in the world. The settlers averaged high in intelligence, many of them were educated, and some were cultured. They had brought books with them even when it meant leaving furniture behind. There were cheerful homes in the cabins and cottages, and genuine hospitality. The churches brought people together with their services and donation parties, and there were singing schools and dances. At the opening of the American House there had been a ball. A real ball, which at least one young lady, just from Brooklyn, attended in a low-necked white satin gown, with a red rose in her hair. It was said to be the best hotel west of Chicago. Margaret Fuller stopped there and liked it so well that she put it in her books. Dances were often held there, and oyster suppers and other social affairs. Those who preferred sport could go hunting and bring in a dozen different kinds of small game and an occasional deer or wild cat. Incredible fish were caught in the Kishwaukee—pickerel weighing ten, fifteen, twenty pounds.

Moreover, in 1835 the last Indians in the county had said goodbye to their hunting grounds, their cornfields and their cemetery and stoically moved on. Seventy Potawatomi, under their old chief, Monomonie. There never had been any Indian trouble in Boone County and there never would be.

Of course there were hardships, privations and dangers that would dismay us nowadays. An all but complete lack of what we consider necessary conveniences and comforts. Bitter cold in winter, with only wood for fuel in houses none too weatherproof. Scarcity sometimes of "store" foods



—sugar, tea, coffee, etc.—and of other supplies that must be hauled from Chicago. No means of communication but the stage and the mails, both slow, uncertain and expensive. Fever and ague—curse of the pioneer—consumption, perhaps cholera. All summer and all autumn the threat of prairie fires hanging over crops and cattle and homes and lives.

But all these things were temporary. The settlers were sure of that. Next year, or the year after, there would be great improvement. There was talk already of a plank road to Chicago. Talk, too, of a railroad through Belvidere, and still wilder talk of an invention called the telegraph. More buildings and better ones were going up, more settlers were coming, more doctors, more of everything they needed. Meanwhile, everybody was making money or expecting to, establishing homes and founding businesses. There was opportunity for every man, a sense of plenty that must have heartened the poorest.

Young Hurlbut fitted well into the times and the place. He was adventurous, for he had volunteered and gone to the Seminole War some years before. He was ambitious, or he would never have left a comfortable home in a city for this frontier village. He had brains, he had energy, he had a genius for making friends.

Belvidere seems to have liked him from the start. He was a fluent, witty, natural speaker on almost any topic, and a man like that is in demand where newspapers and books are scarce. He was anti-slavery, too, which endeared him to people already getting excited about abolition. That he was a Southerner and yet held such views made him all the more popular.

There is a picture of him taken about this time. It shows a well-modelled, intelligent face with a good forehead, fine eyes and heavy dark hair. He wore a mustache but no



beard, and was a handsome man. He came of good family—his father was a clergyman, one brother a newspaper man in New York who became editor and then owner of the *World*, and another who was connected with the Smithsonian Institution. He was used to good society, he was always well dressed, and he liked fun. From the standpoint of the girls and their mothers, he must have been a great acquisition to the town.

“S. A. Hurlbut, Atty-at-Law, will practice in the courts of Boone, McHenry, DeKalb, and Winnebago.”

So, for a long time, read his card in the *Standard*, which began publication in 1851. For a time it was “Hurlbut & Loop,” again, “Hurlbut & Burgess” and “Hurlbut & Randall.” James L. Loop was the most notable of his partners. When he died, in Rockford, one paper said that undoubtedly he had the finest legal ability of any man who had ever practiced there. He came to Belvidere in 1838, was prosecuting attorney for the Northern District of Illinois 1843-45, and Secretary of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, 1846-50. He was an uncle of C. B. Loop, so well-known as Major of the 95th Illinois Volunteer Infantry. He married a Miss Stevens, one of the four daughters of a New York state man who had settled in Belvidere.

Perhaps it was through him or his wife that Hurlbut met Sophronia Stevens, a sister of Mrs. Loop. He married her May 13, 1847. She was a charming and stately woman, serene and dignified, who was to be entirely at home in the distinguished future he was building.

Illinois' second constitutional convention was held that year in Springfield, and Hurlbut was elected a delegate. It opened June 7, and almost certainly he took his bride down there with him as part of the honeymoon.

The convention was an event of major importance in his life. It was his debut into state politics, his introduc-



tion to the more influential politicians. He made a speech and proposed a motion about our banking laws.

Lincoln was living there, though he was in Chicago during part of the session, attending the great Rivers and Harbors Convention. It would be interesting to know if his friendship with Hurlbut started then. At any rate, the next year he sent a copy of *The Battery*, a Whig campaign paper, to Hurlbut and wrote as if to someone with whom he was on familiar terms, "If it strikes you as giving promise of being a good campaign paper, please get as many subscriptions as you can and send them on. I have put you down for one copy, the subscription for which I will pay myself if you are not satisfied with it."

Of course all men's lives are greatly influenced by the friends they make, but Hurlbut's was particularly so. He studied law in Charleston with James L. Pettigru, "foremost citizen and jurist of South Carolina," an anti-slavery man and during the War openly for the Union. Undoubtedly his opinions affected Hurlbut's and started him on the road to Belvidere and Springfield.

Lincoln and he were personal friends, according to Nicolay and Hay, and it was Lincoln who made him a Brigadier General, and Lincoln who always put out a hand to help when the rivalries and jealousies of the army threatened him.

Logan, Sherman, Rawlins and Stanton were all proven friends, and much in his military career is traceable to them. Blaine was his friend, and as Secretary of State sent him on his last adventure.

In 1847, however, Lincoln and Hurlbut were just two more young lawyers. They had plenty of ambition but small reason to think that either of them would ever be in a position to do great favors for anybody. Hurlbut and his wife came back to Belvidere. In the spring the consti-



tution was voted on and ratified without enthusiasm as better, maybe, than none. Hurlbut ran for presidential elector on the Whig ticket and was defeated. The Illinois and Michigan Canal was opened at last. Belvidere's first newspaper, the *Republican*, started publication.

In 1849 the gold rush began, and ox teams and prairie schooners creaked through the village on their appalling journey. In 1850 the railroad was finished from Chicago to Elgin. Nothing particular happened and continued to happen to Hurlbut.

The next year the railroad reached Belvidere. What that meant, we can hardly realize. It was the first railroad that many of the settlers had ever seen. Trains were crowded and people gathered at the depot to "see the cars come in" much as they would gather for a circus parade. But the trains were more than a spectacle. They were a visible link with the rest of the world, a reassurance against isolation and loneliness, and a promise of greater prosperity and growth.

Belvidere had a public school now and a fine new weekly paper—the *Standard*—that thrived and lived for forty-six years. Ralph Roberts was the editor, and one has only to look through a few copies to know that he was an honest man, with sense and courage and humor and a forthright pen. He was a faithful friend and admirer of Hurlbut's, and chronicled every move of his that could possibly be considered news. If it was creditable, he endorsed it. If it was questionable, he printed it in full, with biblical frankness, added that there must be some good explanation, and left it to Hurlbut to clear up thoroughly and publicly. A great deal of Hurlbut's popularity was due to the *Standard*.

Hurlbut was still practicing law, making speeches, serving on committees, and building up connections and friendships, and in 1852 some small reward came. He was made



County Committeeman by the Whigs, and later nominated for the legislature. He was not elected, but that happened to a good many other Whigs, and he had at least received party recognition. For three years more he was a Whig. Then the Republican party was formed and he joined it and began speaking for Fremont at meetings in Belvidere, Rockford, and other towns.

There were signs and portents in the 1850's that are easy to interpret now. Men went about their usual business and pleasure, did their work, attended church, read their Bibles and their newspapers and perhaps *Harper's New Monthly* or the *Saturday Evening Post* or Dickens' latest book. There was much interest in spiritualism and phrenology. Temperance was an absorbing topic, with clubs spreading all over the country. But one question was beginning to overshadow everything else—slavery. Propaganda slipped into every paper, orators raved against it and ranted for it, John Brown died, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* did its work. There was the long struggle between Lincoln and Douglas, and the great debates. People did not reason about it. They felt—and took pride in feeling fiercely and blindly. Patriotism, they called it, Northerner and Southerner alike. Emotions were rising too high for safety.

In 1855 Hurlbut organized the Boone Rifles, a military company. He had had experience in soldiering in the Seminole War, and liked it. There were twenty-one men in the company, and their uniform, in accordance with government regulations, consisted of a blue coat with green collar and cuffs, sky-blue pants with green stripe, cap with green pompom. Hurlbut was Captain and Allen C. Fuller, another brilliant young lawyer, was 1st Lieutenant.

They had their first public parade that fall, and we can imagine their wives and sweethearts, in bonnets and mantillas and hoopskirts, gathered under the wooden awnings



of the State Street stores, watching them proudly. Proudly, of course—but with premonitions? Who knows?

Later the company went to Freeport, and the *Bulletin* called it “a beautiful company” and complimented Captain Hurlbut on his military ability.

He went on making speeches—at Fourth of July celebrations, at the Union school, in the Masonic hall, in Rockford and Cherry Valley and Belvidere and all over Boone County. His audiences loved it, and he was getting great experience, of value all his life. Lincoln once said that he was “the ablest orator on the stump that Illinois had ever produced.”

In 1858 he was elected State Representative, and with his wife, went to Springfield. He made some speeches in the House that were well received, and some political speeches outside. The party leaders were beginning to realize his worth. In 1860 he went on a speech-making tour in August, and on another in October, principally in southern Illinois. In November he ran for re-election and won.

And now Lincoln was President and people talked openly of war. Hurlbut and some anonymous friend went to Washington for the inauguration, and the friend wrote back to the *Standard* that they attended the levee at the White House and “Mr. Lincoln was as cordial as usual and seemed in fine spirits . . . Mr. Hurlbut left here last night with despatches for Charleston and also with letters for Maj. Anderson.”

Hurlbut's ostensible errand, however, was to visit his sister. He telegraphed her he was coming and set out pointedly in the rôle of affectionate brother. Ward Lamon, who went at the same time, was the one supposed to be on official business. Interest centered on him, as was intended, and nobody paid much attention to Hurlbut.



His real errand was to discover how much Union sentiment there was in the South and how best to appeal to it. Lincoln did not share Seward's optimism about it, and, knowing Hurlbut was Charleston-born, with friends and relatives there, had sent for him and asked him to go down and learn what he could. Hurlbut stayed two days, talked with Pettigru and a few others, returned to Washington and made a long written report. The gist of it was, "Nothing to appeal to."

It was a history-making mission, perhaps, for peace and war were balanced on a knife edge.

Hurlbut came home convinced it was war which was coming, and that it would start soon. On April 15, Lincoln's call for troops was issued, and on April 20 a war meeting was held that drew the largest crowd ever seen in Belvidere. Hurlbut made a fiery speech, A. C. Fuller another. The audience was stirred almost to hysteria. When the enlistment roll was opened, Hurlbut was the first to put down his name. Before the end of five days, 115 men had signed, in this small community. Hurlbut was elected Captain.

On Monday, May 6, he received orders to take his company to Freeport on the 11th. On Tuesday there was a citizens' meeting at which it was resolved to present the company with "a uniform military dress." Tuesday night a committee went to Chicago to buy the cloth. Wednesday night it came. Thursday and Friday, assembled in Union Hall, all the tailors in town cut frantically, and most of the women sewed. On Saturday morning, the company set off for camp all dressed in their new suits. It became Company B of the 15th Illinois Volunteer Infantry—the first regiment in the state mustered in for regular U. S. service of three years.

Hurlbut resigned his commission as Captain almost at once, and in June was appointed Brigadier General of Vol-



unteers. John Pope, Grant, Prentiss and McClernand received similar appointments at the same time.

Boone County was greatly pleased by this recognition of one of her sons, and it must have seemed to him like the real beginning of his life. On July 11, he left for Quincy to report for duty. The next day his two horses were shipped, and presumably faithful "Lundy" Tuttle went with them, for he was Hurlbut's hostler throughout the War. A town character, Lundy—Canadian by birth, with a strain of Indian blood, so it was said. Hurlbut was his one great hero. Lundy survived him twenty years, but never forgot him nor tired of telling what a wonderful man and soldier he was.

The new General was tentatively assigned to the command of northern Missouri. In that capacity he issued a proclamation to the inhabitants, dated Quincy; but before he was actually on the ground, along came General Pope and assumed the command himself, as senior officer.

That kind of thing happened often in the Civil war. Being a general seems to have been a hazardous occupation, aside from the risks of battle. There were savage rivalries, corroding envies, open hatreds among the generals themselves. They could and did pull strings in Washington, and the politicians pulled strings themselves and made and unmade reputations. A man never knew of what he might be accused. Fremont, Grant, McClellan, and many others were superseded at least once, and threatened with ruin and disgrace.

So Hurlbut went instead to Jefferson City to select a site for a camp, then was sent with a small body of troops into Marion County to discourage the people from shooting at Union troop trains. In the fall he came home for a furlough, and in December he received orders from General Halleck to report at once at St. Louis for service.



There he was assigned to a command at Benton Barracks, but in February, 1862, he was sent to Fort Donelson, which had just surrendered. Grant put him in command of the Fort, and after he had brought some sort of order out of the confusion, he was placed in command of what was afterward called the "Fighting Fourth" division, Army of the Tennessee. Included in it were the 15th, 28th, 32d, 41st, 46th, and 53d Illinois Volunteer Infantry and Bolton's (Chicago) Battery. Again his military career was under way.

Of all the movements of the war, the advance on Pittsburgh Landing is one of the most picturesque. Five divisions embarking, eighty gun boats steaming in procession up the Tennessee River, all burning wood, so that they were "pillars of smoke by day, pillars of fire by night." Strange sights and sounds for that quiet country!

They reached Savannah and Hurlbut's division was ordered to Pittsburgh Landing. Sherman and his division followed, Prentiss and his division, C. F. Smith and his. The stage was set for the battle of April 6.

The attack came about 7 o'clock in the morning. Half an hour later, Sherman sent word to Hurlbut that he was heavily attacked, and in ten minutes Hurlbut had sent a brigade to him. A few minutes later a similar message came from Prentiss and Hurlbut took forward his two remaining brigades, enabled Prentiss to check his retreat and prevented a Union defeat.

Incidents of the day reveal something of the General's character. John C. Long, an officer of his staff, said in a letter to the *Tribune* after Hurlbut's death, "Early in the engagement he rode out in front of the division on his large gray stallion—a very conspicuous mark for sharp shooters—and surveyed the enemy through his field glass for some time. Later when we remonstrated, he said that most the division were strangers to him, and he wanted to convince



them from the start that he was no coward." And when the division was about to advance, "he ordered me to send all the drum corps I could find to the head of the column, because he had made up his mind long ago that when he did go into battle it should be with music and flying colors."

Shiloh was the next day, the fiercest battle of the River war. Over 10,000 of each side killed or wounded. And the bloodiest spot of all was the Peach Orchard, where Hurlbut, defending it, placed his men on their stomachs in a double row to shoot Johnston's men like rabbits. "Come on! I'll lead you!" Johnston cried. He was killed, but they did take Peach Orchard.

The battle lasted until four in the afternoon, and only the arrival of Buell's and Wallace's divisions saved the Union army. Grant and Sherman were, of course, harshly criticized for the narrowness of the escape, but Hurlbut fared very well. One man said that "no general handled and fought his division better than he did." Another wrote to the Freeport *Bulletin*, "The General conducted himself with great gallantry, and his officers and men sustained him heroically." Washington must have agreed with them, for Hurlbut was promoted to Major General. Illinois troops, too, were earning the admiration of the whole country by their courage and efficiency.

Corinth, Mississippi, was the next objective of General Halleck, who was in command. Hurlbut's division was sent to Memphis with Sherman's in June, to Bolivar in September, back to Corinth in October. On October 3, he had a skirmish with Van Dorn's troops as they advanced to attack Corinth, and on the 5th, after their defeat, he met and fought them at a bridge over the Hatchie River, successfully blocking their way.

Grant, in a General Order congratulating the Armies of the West, said of Rosecrans' and Hurlbut's divisions, "To



these two divisions all praise is due and will be awarded by a grateful country."

There had been rumors of unfriendliness between Sherman and Hurlbut during this campaign, but on September 19, 1862, Sherman wrote him expressing regret that their commands were to be separated. He closed: "I need not express to you the assurance of my high personal and official respect, for I hope I have evinced it on many and all occasions."

In October Hurlbut was given command of the district of Jackson, in November command at Memphis, and in December, command of the reorganized 16th corps, Army of the Tennessee. Later he arranged the transfer of the 4th division from the 17th to the 16th corps, thus bringing the 15th Illinois back under his command, much to the satisfaction of officers and men.

Already the government and the army were troubled by the question of what to do with the escaped and emancipated slaves. The Freedmen's Bureau did much fine work, but it was the idea of the administration that they be colonized along the Mississippi River under the protection of Negro soldiers. Many people thought that unwise, Sherman among them. Gen. Lorenzo Thomas wanted to enlist them in the army. He urged it on Hurlbut, and finally was able to inform Washington that Hurlbut would enlist and use Negro troops. It was an unlucky decision for Hurlbut.

Fort Pillow had been built by the Confederates and then abandoned by them. Hurlbut reoccupied it with a garrison half white and half black. Forrest retook it and a massacre of the Negro troops followed. The North was wildly indignant and had to be soothed by the punishment of somebody. Hurlbut was removed from his command because he had not somehow or other driven Forrest out of the territory before the attack.



Hurlbut explained over and over his dangerous shortage of troops. He showed how his forces were drained away by the continual demands of other generals on other campaigns, in spite of his protests. He told how General Thomas had urged the use of Negro soldiers. Sherman backed him up valiantly. It was all the administration's fault, he said without mincing. The employment of untrained, untested black troops in such a place should never have been considered. Gradually popular clamor died down. Indignation veered to something else, and General Hurlbut was sent to New Orleans as Commander of the Department of the Gulf.

That was in 1864. In 1863 he was still at Memphis, occupied principally in guarding railroads. Only once in a great while did anything spectacular happen — like the Grierson raid, for instance. Hurlbut planned that. Col. B. H. Grierson, with the 7th Illinois and 2d Iowa Cavalry, dashed the length of Mississippi, through enemy country, destroying railroads, cutting off supplies, taking prisoners, doing all the damage and gathering all the information possible, and came safe and comparatively sound to Baton Rouge. A daring expedition and, according to Nicolay and Hay, one of the most important of the kind during the war.

It was necessary and highly valuable work that General Hurlbut was doing at Memphis, but he seems to have felt that he was sidetracked there. At any rate, in July, 1863, he abruptly sent in his resignation. It was not accepted. Grant would not hear of it. So Hurlbut went on repairing and guarding railroads. When he wrote a rather complaining letter to Sherman, Sherman replied urging him to put up with the situation for patriotism's sake.

Lincoln and Hurlbut were in correspondence more or less throughout the War, and letters are in existence showing that the President sometimes asked informally for advice and information. He wrote the General in July, 1863,



at Memphis, about reconstruction, which he was so desirous of advancing. Hurlbut wrote back that he thought Tennessee was ready then to repeal the act of secession and come back into the Union.

Apparently Lincoln was not wholly satisfied with the way affairs were being handled, for in a letter of November, he said he could not understand why Hurlbut and Gen. E. R. S. Canby were acting as they were. Could he have been referring to the impressment of private citizens into the army? Sherman had issued an order permitting it, and Hurlbut, needing men very badly, had impressed 2700 in Memphis alone.

It was the next April that Fort Pillow was taken, with all the resulting complications and injustices and anxiety. Before quitting his command, Hurlbut issued a farewell order—a temperate, earnest, patriotic message that after sixty years can still touch the heart. Then he came back to Belvidere and stayed there four months before his new orders arrived.

New Orleans was torn with political troubles those days, with war hatreds and fears, with graft and dishonesty and treachery. No man holding power could hope to escape calumny from one source or another. General Hurlbut did not escape it, and some of the accusations enraged him so that he wrote to the War Department and demanded an investigation. He did not get it. Adjutant General Rawlins wrote him that it was not worth while, that the whole thing “was proved to be malicious, unsupported by any testimony except what was suborned,” and that Hurlbut “would leave the army with the highest confidence and esteem of everyone whose esteem is worth having.”

Secretary of War Stanton wrote that “there is not a shadow of any credible evidence impeaching the correctness of your administration” and “no occasion for any further proceedings,” and that “up to the hour of his death



you enjoyed the full confidence of President Lincoln . . . be assured that you have the esteem and respect of . . . E. M. Stanton."

Still, Hurlbut could not have been sorry to give up a command that could involve one in such undeserved unpleasantness. Three months after the end of the War, he was mustered out of the army and came back to Belvidere. In August, the 95th came home and there was a festival of welcome—a parade, a banquet, speeches by the town's own notable officers: Maj. Gen. S. A. Hurlbut, Adj. Gen. A. C. Fuller, Maj. C. B. Loop.

The War had been won. The slaves had been freed. Many a man who had been campaigning two, three, or four years, must have wondered, "Now what?"

There were sidewalks in Belvidere now, and the *Standard* was exhorting their owners to clear them off in winter. There were shade trees along the streets and, said the *Standard*, "their lower branches should be trimmed, not left for the cows to chew off." There were six or eight substantial churches, two large assembly halls, a First National bank, many handsome, spacious homes, two baseball clubs—the Belvidere and the Mystic—which consolidated under the name of Phoenix. People were arguing about Women's Rights, being shocked at bloomers, going to seances; and runaway horses were traffic's big risk. The population was around 3,000.

The Grand Army of the Republic was organized in 1866, and Hurlbut was made Commander-in-Chief—the first to hold the office. His friends wished to nominate him for Congressman-at-large, but when he found that Logan was also after the nomination, he withdrew. Only a month before election he decided to run for the state legislature. He was elected. There was talk of making him Speaker, but nothing came of it. However, a writer who signed himself



"Beaufort", in an article dated Springfield, called him "the undoubted leader of the House." Most of the members "impress one unfavorably as to ability" but "that gentleman . . . with the compact, short, rotund body, smooth, round, pleasant face, large head . . . fiery, brilliant, sound, eloquent in debate—Gen. Hurlbut—is an exception."

He handed Belvidere another bouquet by describing Allen C. Fuller, and naming him as the leader of the Senate.

That summer Hurlbut resumed his law practice at home and started building a large and handsome house. Lyman Trumbull paid him a visit in the fall and went to the county fair and—could there have been a connection?—in November Hurlbut went to Washington in the interests of the Illinois and Michigan Canal and stayed there some three months. When he returned he went with A. C. Fuller as county delegate to the state Republican convention and he was presidential elector of the state-at-large.

1869 was a big year for Belvidere. The *Standard* said, "An effort is being made to secure lamps along some of the principal streets. The citizens have to subscribe enough to pay for the lamps at \$10 apiece, the Corporation finding the oil. We learn that two or three are secured for Mechanic street, and the residents of the East side are raising a subscription for two or three to light up the dark corners." Velocipedes made their appearance in Chicago, and while the *Standard* reassures us that they "will not supersede horses," the young moderns of Belvidere began to dash around on them. Decoration Day was started, Grant was inaugurated, and Belvidere's most famous citizen—General Hurlbut—was appointed Minister to Colombia.

The new President was greatly interested in South and Central American affairs, which gave the post importance. Also, Europe as well as America was urging that a ship canal be built across the Isthmus by somebody.



A journey to Bogota was no week-end trip those days. He would have to go to New York, take a boat there for Aspinwall, a government vessel there to the nearest seaport, and go mule-back from there on. He left in the middle of September, with his wife and their only child, George. A large crowd, very proud of their fellow-townsmen, gathered at the depot to see them off.

Eight weeks later the *Standard* gave the next news of them. They were at Cartagena, where they expected to be delayed until the rains set in and raised the river enough to float their boats.

Eventually they arrived in Bogota, and on November 3 he was officially received by the President. Apparently he had been specially charged with the promotion of the canal project, for he brought the matter up almost at once. The Colombian government was friendly to it, and in the spring of 1870 he announced that he had succeeded in negotiating a treaty for the right of way for the Darien canal. For some reason or other, that was the end of it.

There is a vague sort of story that George Hurlbut, the General's son, did some unusual exploring down there, going into country where white men had never been before. Nobody is clear about it now, but it is certain that the U. S. Government sent two expeditions to South America in 1870 to explore proposed canal routes, and one of them went to the lower part of the Isthmus of Darien. It is entirely possible that George Hurlbut joined them and went along—an interesting but hard and dangerous journey. He was a civil engineer by profession, and had the alert, questing mind of his father's family.

George came home the next summer. As might be expected, he brought with him a variety of South American curiosities, including insects, butterflies, and 150 specimens of humming birds. There was pottery, too, and odds and



ends of native workmanship, and some of it is yet to be found in Belvidere.

General Hurlbut and his wife came back in the spring of 1872, and he at once resumed the old way of life. He gave lectures—on Colombia, now—for the Baptist church, to which the family belonged, he spoke at an Old Settlers' picnic, he was nominated for Congress, he made political speeches in the state and out, he was attacked by his old newspaper enemies, he replied by quoting Lincoln, Stanton, Rawlins. Everything was just as it had been.

He was elected by a majority of 12,000, Grant was re-elected. Down at Danville, Joseph C. Cannon was elected for the first time to the House of Representatives. Blaine, in his *Twenty Years of Congress*, says, "Stephen A. Hurlbut and Joseph Cannon entered from Illinois. Each soon acquired a prominent position in the House, Gen. Hurlbut as a ready debater, and Mr. Cannon as an earnest worker."

For a newcomer, Hurlbut received unusual recognition. He was on the Committee on Railroads and Canals, Civil Service Reform, and Mississippi River Improvement. He was on the House committee taking the remains of Senator Sumner to Boston for burial. He introduced bills on salaries, on railroad rates, on compensation for slaves (which he opposed). He was active in the promotion of a rather odd scheme to build a government-owned freight railroad from Chicago to the Atlantic seaboard.

In between, he spoke at Sycamore, at the McHenry county fair, at Belvidere, on politics and railroads and what not. When the Army of the Tennessee had a great reunion at Toledo, he made a fine speech. President Grant was there, and so were Sherman and Logan—old friends and men of national importance.

In 1875, General Hurlbut was on the Congressional committee investigating the Vicksburg "massacre" and on an-



other which inspected West Point. He made the Decoration Day oration at Cincinnati.

To some people, 1876 was the year of the Centennial, for nearly 10,000,000 of them flocked to Philadelphia, fed their hungry eyes and minds and imaginations, and never forgot so long as they lived. But to many others, decidedly including General Hurlbut, it was the year of the Hayes-Tilden contest.

Blaine had wanted the Republican presidential nomination and, said the *Chicago Times*, "Hurlbut, who was Blaine's friend, was sent home to 'fix things up' in the district and state. He did 'fix' all the office-holders in the district. He went to Springfield and 'fixed' the state delegation. He knocked the wind out of Joe Medill, Russell Jones, and all of the Bristow and Washburne crowd."

It was Hurlbut who suggested Robert G. Ingersoll as the man to present Blaine's name, and he and Charles B. Farwell "represented Blaine's interests at the national convention in Cincinnati."

The first ballot gave Blaine more than twice as many votes as his nearest competitor, and almost five times as many as Hayes. Victory looked sure. But in the end Hayes was unanimously nominated.

Then came the election, the long, feverish uncertainty about the result, the claims and counter-claims and all the dubious battling of a big political war. Then the Electoral Commission—fifteen men assumed suddenly able, by some sort of magic, to decide justly something nobody else could. There was a sub-committee of Congressional lawyers, and General Hurlbut was on it. Seven of the Commission decided that Tilden had been elected, eight that Hayes had been.

Hurlbut had got much favorable publicity from his management of Blaine's campaign. More than ever he was in demand as a speaker, both in the House and throughout



the country. There was a rumor that he might be appointed Secretary of the Treasury. The McHenry *Plain Dealer* asserted that his influence in Washington was "second to no other Republican ever sent from the 4th district," and B. H. Bristow is reported to have said that there was "only one man in the House more able to meet and successfully combat the enemies of our country than Gen. S. A. Hurlbut, and that man is James G. Blaine."

But difficulties were developing back in that 4th district. Winnebago County wanted a Winnebago man in Congress, and by a not-too-scrupulous manoeuver at the convention succeeded in nominating William Lathrop of Rockford. General Hurlbut seems to have taken it calmly but his friends were indignant. They held a convention of their own at Marengo and nominated him and he ran and was defeated.

In November, 1876, President Grant sent a committee to Louisiana to watch the counting of the votes. Garfield, Logan and Sherman went, and Hurlbut went on a sub-committee.

The next spring he and Mrs. Hurlbut returned to Belvidere and in July they went for an outing at the new resort, Geneva Lake. It was becoming popular and growing fast. As recently as three years before, practically all visitors had camped out—paying 25 cents a day for the privilege—but several small towns had bought land and laid out "parks", selling lots to their stockholders, and now houses were being built. Three were under construction in Belvidere Park alone, when George Hurlbut laid out the road there in 1876.

General Hurlbut went back to Washington that fall, and opened a law office, but the *Standard* reported him in Belvidere almost every month of 1878. He was a candidate for Congress but the feud was still on with Winnebago County and Lathrop, and he was defeated.



That year the "El" in New York began to run, Edison announced a new system of lighting by electricity, and "Edison's Speaking Phonograph" surprised and puzzled people at Union Hall.

Blaine tried again in 1880 for the presidential nomination, and Hurlbut came to Chicago for the meeting of the state central committee and spoke for Blaine, and he was a delegate to the state convention to nominate Blaine. But Blaine found he could not win, was determined Grant should not, and turned his forces over to Garfield. Garfield, as President, promptly made him Secretary of State, and he in turn appointed Hurlbut Minister to Peru.

The *Standard* announced it with a sort of dry realism—"Peru has just emerged from a war, and Chile still occupies Peru. The General will have to go over the mountains to a small town to find the Peruvian government."

But Blaine had a keen interest in South America. He wanted to bring about a just peace between Peru and Chile, and he wanted to prevent future wars down there. He was planning a Pan-American Congress that would bring all the little nations together and lead, he hoped, to understanding and friendliness. It was proof of his confidence in Hurlbut that he selected him for a post in which he was so much concerned. And Blaine was Secretary of State, the President's personal friend, and a man of very great influence. It was a better appointment than it seemed.

The Hurlbuts gave a reception just before they left, and there must have been great bustle and excitement in the family. George Hurlbut now had two little sons, and they and George and his wife were all going with General Hurlbut and his wife. It was a long trip they were undertaking, into a foreign world.

They sailed July 2, 1881. That day President Garfield was shot. They were already on board when the news reached them. In one instant the future that had looked



so secure and promising turned uncertain and the rosy glow on it faded.

If Garfield died, Arthur would be President, and Arthur was politically the lieutenant of Roscoe Conkling, who was Blaine's mortal enemy. Under Arthur, Blaine would be without influence, would probably be forced to resign as Secretary of State, and his appointees would be on very shaky ground indeed. Particularly if they were personal friends, like Hurlbut.

It was eight days before they could get more news, and at Aspinwall all they learned was that Garfield was still alive but dangerously wounded.

Peru was hoping for some substantial favors from the United States, and Hurlbut's reception was correspondingly cordial. He was given a salute of seventeen guns when he landed at Callao, there was a special train to take him to Lima, and he found a house there ready and waiting for him, with servants, furniture and provisions.

The war had disorganized the country politically. There was no central government, supported by all the people, but in different parts of the country different parties were struggling to gain control and power. The strongest of these was headed by Calderon, and the retiring U. S. Minister had recognized him as provisional President. Hurlbut had been instructed to do the same, and on July 26 he presented his credentials, and from then on was enmeshed in an incredible tangle of politics, finance and intrigue.

Immensely valuable nitrate beds belonging to Bolivia were at the bottom of it. Chile had made war to get possession of them, and refused to make peace till they were ceded to her, with a big indemnity added. Judson Kilpatrick, another Civil War general, was U. S. Minister to Chile and naturally backed up her demands. General Hurlbut as naturally tried to protect the country to which



he was accredited. The two ministers argued, lost their tempers, and quarreled so violently that one paper remarked that Chile and Peru had turned their war over to the ministers to fight, and could now stand on the sidelines and enjoy it. Blaine finally sent down two envoys to try to smooth things out.

What was known as the Cochet claim was the worst complication. Alexander Cochet, a French citizen, had a disputed claim against a guano plant. He never pressed it seriously himself, but when he died, his illegitimate son (who could not possibly have inherited it) sold it to an American syndicate called the Peruvian Co., which was now trying to induce Peru to pay the claim. All they asked was \$900,000,000, though the president of the company refused to swear later that they had paid more than \$50 for it.

J. R. Shiperd was the president, and according to him some of the biggest men in the country were stockholders.

The wildest stories spread. That Blaine was preventing peace in order to force Peru to pay the claim. That he and Hurlbut were supporting Calderon as President because Calderon had agreed to engineer the payment. That they intended to drag the United States into war with Chile, if necessary for the success of their schemes.

Hurlbut wrote the State Department that Shiperd had offered him \$250,000 in stock for his influence, that he refused the bribe but had looked into the claim and that it was entirely baseless—a joke, in fact. And he told them why, in language anybody could understand. But the talk went on. A Congressional investigation was ordered. There was much ado and mud-slinging. In the end the Committee reported that they had found Shiperd's claims and allegations absolutely unfounded. General Hurlbut was exonerated from all blame. But that did not happen till summer, and was too late to do him any good.



Those last months in Peru must have been cruelly hard on him. He was so far away that it was almost impossible to defend himself or even to know of what he was being accused. He wrote once to his brother, "Wanton and wicked disgrace and disaster have been brought upon us, but not through any failure of mine to do what I was sent out to do. I can only hope that the mischief done is not irremediable."

Blaine said over and over again that General Hurlbut had followed instructions and behaved with great discretion in the matter, but Hurlbut wanted a hearing. In December, 1881, he asked for leave of absence to come home and tell his side of the case. The *Standard* of April 4, 1882, said, "Gen. Stephen A. Hurlbut and family are expected to arrive in Belvidere about the middle of May." Directly under that, with nothing to ease the abruptness, comes this—"Since the above was written, intelligence has arrived of the sudden death of Gen. Hurlbut from heart disease."

It was two weeks before the *Standard* could give much more information. Then a brief letter from George Hurlbut was printed which said that the General had risen the morning of March 27, apparently well as usual, had suddenly collapsed, and had died within a short time. He had spoken only once—"God bless you all. I am dying—oh, my heart!"

Peru, which knew what he had been trying to do, hung its buildings with mourning. There was genuine sorrow among all classes. The Peruvian Minister called on President Arthur to present a letter from President Montero expressing the grief of the government and people and referring to General Hurlbut as "the truest and noblest champion of Peru's cause." The women of Peru had just given him a solid gold tablet, twelve by ten inches, ornamented on one side with a star of thirty-eight points and



his monogram in diamonds, and on the other with a presentation inscription, as "a lasting memorial of the esteem and gratitude of Peru." Their names—nearly 1,000 of them—were inscribed in a beautifully bound book accompanying the tablet, "manifesting their gratitude for the efforts he made to save Peru."

He came home for the last time in April.

No man can climb as high as he had climbed, nor outstrip as many rivals, without making enemies and rousing envy, that snarling dog-in-the-manger. But Belvidere seemed honestly, sincerely grieved at his death. The funeral, on April 30, 1882, was the largest and most impressive that had ever taken place in northern Illinois. Business houses, public buildings, and many private homes were draped in black. The procession was over a mile long and in it were companies of Knights Templars, G. A. R., and other organizations, and four military companies. Special trains are said to have brought over 3,000 people to pay him last honors. The Rev. Dr. Kerr of the Unitarian church of Rockford made the principal address and the Masons conducted the services at the grave.

His sudden and tragic death had caused sympathetic comment all over the country, and men of note spoke and wrote their regret.

Gov. S. M. Cullom said in a letter to Charles E. Fuller, explaining why he could not attend the funeral, "In addition to his extraordinary intellectual capacity, he had courage equal to any emergency. He did not hesitate to do whatever he believed to be right, never stopping to consider the effect upon himself. . . . As a legislator in the state, as a soldier in the field, and as a Representative in our national Congress, he proved himself to be a man of great ability and a natural leader."

Hon. O. H. Wright, speaking in the House of Representatives in Springfield, said that Peru "had draped its



cities in mourning and sadness—a mark of respect to an extent that has rarely if ever occurred under the same circumstances. . . . In the few months that he was there, the people had learned to appreciate his worth and his ability as a statesman, a diplomatist, a lawyer and a scholar. . . .”

Gen. A. C. Fuller, in a speech before the Illinois Senate, remarked on “the large place Gen. Hurlbut had held in the affections of his people. . . . He was a firm, true and consistent friend . . . a brilliant thinker and an acute statesman . . . . Whatever he achieved in life he fought for and earned.”

But praise or blame mattered no longer to Stephen A. Hurlbut. He would have been pleased, however, to know that the House of Representatives voted to pay his widow a year’s salary, for the estate which he left her was a small one.

Not many men are living today who served under General Hurlbut, but there is one in Belvidere—Rev. William Tuttle, who enlisted at the age of fourteen and served in the 142d Illinois Volunteer Infantry. “Gen. Hurlbut was extremely popular with his soldiers,” he says. “A martinet when on duty—all officer. But off duty, just a kindly, understanding sort of man without any pretentiousness. I’ve seen him in an ordinary soldier’s blouse with no insignia of his rank, talking with the boys as if he was one of them.”

Mrs. S. A. Hurlbut died in 1887. Some twelve years later George sold the house his father had built and moved to New York City with his wife and two sons. Only the sons are living now. They carry on the family tradition of brilliant minds, Stephen, a teacher and scholar in the East, and William J., a very successful playwright for the stage and screen.



STEPHEN A. HURLBUT, 1815-1882

The prairie village has grown up into an attractive small city. The pioneers are all dead long ago, and the old families are dying out. Nothing tangible is left of General Hurlbut but the graves in the cemetery, the big old house—occupied by strangers now—and the name of the street on which it stands—Hurlbut Avenue.

It is almost ninety years since the autumn night the good-looking young man, seeking his fortune, got off the stage at the American House.



## EVIDENCES OF THE "HIGHER LIFE" ON THE FRONTIER

As Illustrated in the History of Cultural Matters in  
Chicago, 1830 to 1850<sup>1</sup>

By

BAYRD STILL

The town of Chicago was in 1830 an outpost situated some fifty or sixty miles beyond the region which could have been designated at the moment as "frontier." The little village was built around a fort which housed "the most enlightened residents, the little knot of officers, attached to the slender garrison." To accommodate the rest of the government commissioners and a crowd of dependents, there had been built a temporary set of plank huts on the north side of the river. The census of 1830 reported a population of seventy souls. By 1834 Chicago was the last of the chain of outfitting stations for the westward-bound; and the trek of the 'thirties was on. By 1838, the frontier line had reached the town, and Chicago was full of frontier bustle and activity. By 1840, the city boasted close to 5,000 people; and a lyceum lecturer was proclaiming, with all the expansive enthusiasm of the American mind of the 'forties, that Chicago would be "the grand avenue for the transportation of merchandise bound westward," and that it was also "destined to be a great thor-

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<sup>1</sup>In his *A Study of the Higher Life of Chicago* (Chicago, 1905), Thomas J. Riley cites as evidence of this "higher life" the development of parks, boulevards, schools, churches, libraries, women's clubs, charitable societies, art galleries, and musical centers.



## EVIDENCES OF THE "HIGHER LIFE"

oughfare." "Already," said he, "have our splendid steam-boats attracted travelers from all the large towns on the Mississippi, including New Orleans, and every year brings with it an increasing throng".<sup>2</sup> Despite these metropolitan pretensions, the prairie, as one letter records, with its "birds, insects, and snakes (O delightful idea!) as likely as you can imagine,"<sup>3</sup> was within sight of the most citified front parlor. While the ladies were playing "The Battle of Prague" and "The Blue-bottle Fly" on the first piano to arrive in the early 'thirties, wolves howled within a few miles of the music. In 1833, a bear was killed. Shooting parties for deer, wolves, and bear constituted a popular pastime. Wolf-chases on horseback, accompanied by a pack of dogs "consisting of a greyhound or two for running the game, with several of a heavier and fiercer breed for pulling it down," were spirited diversions during 1834.<sup>4</sup>

"The houses were all insignificant," reported Harriet Martineau in the 'thirties, "and run up in various directions without any principle at all".<sup>5</sup> The inns were intolerable. In the 'forties, cows spent the night on the sidewalks, and the city's three constables, when they were not disposing of dogs and street loafers and quelling the saloon brawls in which, according to the Jackson, Michigan, newspaper, frontier Chicago abounded, were kept busy shooin pigs and chickens off the city streets. By this time the little mushroom town had close to 12,000 inhabitants. Yet, physically, its actual frontier character remained. The streets were so full of mud and dust that merchants put logs before their stores to keep their customers from sink-

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<sup>2</sup>*The Development of Chicago*, edited by Milo M. Quaife (Chicago, 1916), p. 154. Mrs. Leander McCormick wrote, "A great many Yankees here. Mrs. Hamilton . . . says we must have a southern society and let the Yankees, Germans, Irish, and French all alone. The people here seem to be from all quarters of the globe." Caroline Kirkland, *Chicago Yesterdays* (Chicago, 1919), p. 38.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>4</sup>From C. F. Hoffman, *A Winter in the Far West* (1835), in Henry H. Hurlbut, *Chicago Antiquities* (Chicago, 1881), p. 248.

<sup>5</sup>Harriet Martineau, in *Development of Chicago*, p. 177.



ing into the mire, and society ladies went to and from their social engagements in stout ox-carts with hay in the bottom. The Chicago of 1850, even, was not divested of frontier crudeness. Although the little upstart village had now achieved a population of more than 25,000, Fredrika Bremer described it as "miserable and ugly." There were no fine houses with gardens; the streets were principally of wood or sand. Log buildings might be seen in every direction. Municipal government was undeveloped. In 1851, a band of Potawatami was encamping on the outskirts of the city. It had been scarcely more than a year since the town had owned a railroad. In November, 1848, the "first train of second-hand cars behind a second-hand engine had run over second-hand rails 10 miles out to the Desplaines River."

There was still the excitement and bustle of land speculation which accompanied the frontier movement in its later stages. As Harriet Martineau said, the rage for speculation was like "some prevalent mania" which had affected the whole people. "As the gentlemen of our party walked the streets, store keepers hailed them from their doors with offers of farms, and all manner of land lots advising them to speculate before the price of land rose higher. Horse thieves and sharpers were active everywhere. But prosperity had intoxicated the populace."<sup>6</sup> Chicago might be a wicked city, but its obviously bright commercial and financial future was already and quite surprisingly becoming a fact rather than an expansive, speculative frontier fancy.

That evidence of the "higher life" should rise immediately from this crude soil is hardly to be expected. Yet the speed at which the transmission of culture took place in the westward movement is exhibited by the early appearances in Chicago of a kind of social life that seems quite

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<sup>6</sup>Harriet Martineau, *Society in America* (3 vols., London, 1837), I, pp. 259-60.



## EVIDENCES OF THE "HIGHER LIFE"

out of keeping with the muddy streets, log cabins, and bear hunts that constituted the physical exterior of Chicago between 1830 and 1850. Harriet Martineau sensed a superior quality in the society of the town. "There is some allowable pride in the place about its society," she said. "It is a remarkable thing to meet such an assemblage of educated, refined, and wealthy persons as may be found there, living in small inconvenient houses on the edge of a wild prairie."<sup>7</sup> Even Fredrika Bremer, who came from Europe in 1850 seemingly predisposed to scorn the place, was forced to admit that in Chicago she had "become acquainted with some of the most agreeable and delightful people that ever I met with anywhere." Said she, "Chicago is a genuine baby of the Great West! but as I have already said, somewhat unkemmed as yet."<sup>8</sup>

It is a question whether Chicagoans were exhibiting a yearning for the "higher life" or merely for human companionship when they attended, in the early 'thirties, the miraculous performance of Professor Bowers who set up in the home of one Mr. D. Graves and advertised that beside drawing a red-hot iron across his tongue and hands, dipping his fingers in melted lead, and making use of a red-hot iron to convey the same to his mouth, he would also perform amusing feats of ventriloquism and legerdemain (50 and 25 cents); nor is it a sure sign of pilgrimage to a shrine of culture when only a year or so later, the frontier theater-goer was thrilled by the presentation of "The Idiot Witness" and "The Carpenter of Rouen" in a dramatic environment made up of rough seats and chairs upon the level dining room floor of the Sauganash hotel, crowded audiences, rude scenery, and smoking lamps.<sup>9</sup> But by 1838, there was agitation for a permanent theater in the city,

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<sup>7</sup>Harriet Martineau, in *Development of Chicago*, p. 178.

<sup>8</sup>Fredrika Bremer, in *Ibid.*, pp. 214-15.

<sup>9</sup>Alfred T. Andreas, *History of Chicago* (3 vols., 1884-6), I, p. 475.



despite the moral danger urged by some; and, consequently, Isherwood and McKenzie fitted up an auditorium, with boxes, gallery, and pit, seating in all four hundred persons. Although lamp and candle were the only lights for the theatre until September 4, 1850,<sup>10</sup> there had developed much earlier a real interest in drama as such. Repertory companies traveled west in the 'thirties; and amateur Thespians were performing in Chicago before 1841.<sup>11</sup> In 1842, a group of "young men belonging in the city" petitioned that the "Thespian Society," without having to pay for a license, might be allowed to give "public exhibitions of a theatrical character—say once in two weeks."<sup>12</sup> By the late 1840's, critical reviews of theatrical productions were appearing in the newspapers.

The splendor of Chicago's first real theatre has an almost continental brilliance as described in the "Autobiography" of Joseph Jefferson who had come west by water with his parents on a dramatic tour of western towns in 1838. Says he, "Now for the theatre. Newly painted canvas, tack hammer at work on stuffed seats in the dress circle, planing boards in the pit, new drop curtain let down for inspection—'beautiful!' A medallion of Shakespeare suffering from a severe pain in the stomach over the center, with 'One touch of nature makes the whole world kin' written under him, and a large, painted, brick-red drapery looped up by Justice with swords and scales showing an arena with a large number of gladiators hacking away at one another in the distance to a delighted Roman public. There were two private boxes with little white and gold balustrades and turkey-red curtains, over one box a portrait of Beethoven and over the other a portrait of Handel—

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<sup>10</sup>J. H. McVicker, *The Theatre: Its Early Days in Chicago* (Chicago, 1884), p. 69.

<sup>11</sup>Ralph L. Rusk, *The Literature of the Middle Western Frontier* (2 vols., New York, 1925), I, p. 364.

<sup>12</sup>Andreas, I, p. 482.



upon unfriendly terms, glaring at each other. The dome was pale blue with pink and white clouds, on which reposed four ungraceful ballet girls representing the seasons and apparently dropping flowers, snow, and grapes into the pit." Over each season there floated four flat little cherubim "in various stages of spinal curvature . . . The green room was a perfect gem, with a three-foot mirror and cushioned seats around the wall—traps under the stage so convenient that Ophelia could walk from her grave to her dressing room with perfect ease."<sup>13</sup> Despite Jefferson's witticisms, it was a quite orthodox theatre with undoubtedly sophisticated decorations for the day. The elegance of Rice's theatre, which opened in 1847, prompted an expansive remark in the *Chicago Democrat* of June 29, to the effect that "Chicago can boast of being ahead of any city twice its size in the theatrical line." The *Democrat* spoke, too,—and this in 1847—of the dress circle being the "most brilliant ever brought out by any entertainment in our city."<sup>14</sup> The *Journal* of July acclaimed the "number of ladies—the beauty and fashion of the city—in nightly attendance."<sup>15</sup> The problem of getting the women to attend the theatre was one which had to be faced everywhere by managers of the frontier theatre. An editorial in the *Chicago American* during the 'forties asked, "Why do not the fair ladies of our city lend the theatre, occasionally, the light of their countenance?—If we believed that the tendency of the legitimate drama, as being exhibited in this city was demoralizing, corrupting, or injurious, we would be among the last to recommend it to the favor of the public."<sup>16</sup> W. G. Carson in his *The Theatre on the Frontier* speaks of the attempts of St. Louis managers to

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<sup>13</sup>Joseph Jefferson, *The Autobiography of Joseph Jefferson* (New York, 1889-90), pp. 21-4.

<sup>14</sup>*Chicago Democrat*, June 28, 1847.

<sup>15</sup>*Chicago Daily Journal*, July 1, 1847.

<sup>16</sup>Andreas, I, p. 479.



overcome the custom which "seems to have debarred most of the women from attendance."<sup>17</sup>

The early actors were a cosmopolitan group. The earliest stock companies were quite generally family affairs. One included Mr. and Mrs. Rice, Mr. and Mrs. McVicker, Mr. and Mrs. D. Clifford, and so forth. Joseph Jefferson tells to what handy use the children of the families could be put as "small first villager" or "banquet guest" or "Roman senator." But soon more distinguished dramatic personages came to act in the frontier theatre: Dan Marble, Edwin Forrest, Junius B. Booth, T. D. Rice (who did such a sophisticated thing, theatrically, as intentionally to burlesque Shakespeare's "Othello"), James E. Murdoch, and Julia Dean. In 1849, the Rice theatre announced the engagement of one who had been for several years the leading lady in the principal theatres of New York, New Orleans, and other large cities, and was "on her way to fill a summer engagement in New York."<sup>18</sup>

While the repertoire was not unusually high, it was surprisingly sophisticated in view of what might be expected of frontier taste.<sup>19</sup> The melodramatic and musical performances found great favor; but the works of Shakespeare met a ready reception as well. In 1848, Edwin Forrest was playing "Othello," "Hamlet," "Macbeth" and "King Lear." Booth played "Richard III" and "Shylock" later in the same year. The 1838-39 repertoire was not of quite so serious tone; yet its "standard" quality, drawn largely from European authors, suggests the cosmopolitan influence of the frontier theatre. Plays of a classical character were popular. Among such were "Damon and Pythias,"

<sup>17</sup>W. G. B. Carson, *The Theatre on the Frontier* (Chicago, 1932), p. 303.

<sup>18</sup>"The only place of amusement we now have in the city is the theatre, and, so far as talent and character are concerned, it is supported by better actors than any theatre of twice its size in the United States." *Chicago Democrat*, May 24, 1849.

<sup>19</sup>"The season of 1839 was the beginning of a high standard of dramatic taste in Chicago." E. L. Masters, *The Tale of Chicago* (New York, 1933), p. 86.



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"Virginius," "The Lady of Lyons," "Richelieu," and "The Gladiator." In this period Shakespeare's comedies, "The Taming of the Shrew" and "The Merchant of Venice," were popular. In 1839, "Oliver Twist" and "She Stoops to Conquer" were played. All this in a day when less than 4,500 people were living in this relatively inaccessible region. Both "The Review; or the Wags of Windsor" and "The Illustrious Stranger; or Buried Alive," suggesting the characters and situations later concocted by Gilbert and Sullivan, indicate the British influence in the repertory. The setting of the "Wags" is in England; and the action concerns the farcical attempts—duly rewarded—of Quotem to do what every loyal wag of Windsor, and elsewhere, loves to: see the king and queen. Likewise the skit called "Buried Alive" tells, with such farcical dialogue, characterization, and intrigue, the adventures of Bowbell, who, on a voyage to China for tripe and butter, becomes shipwrecked on a desert island and is married and buried alive by mistake. A collection of plays, hundreds in number, called the *Cumberland's British Theatre* appears to contain almost the entire repertoire of the frontier drama. In sum, it was decidedly English in matter and tone.<sup>20</sup>

The frontier theatrical manager even achieved some super-productions in the 'thirties. The play "Cherry and Fairstar," besides abounding in scenery, decoration and costumes that were "rich, tasteful and beautiful," astounded the audience in its ingenious scenic representation of the blossoming Aloe, "the moving or dancing waters, and especially the splendid Grecian galley" at the conclusion of the second act. The Chicago *American* was "glad to see so many spectators witness the triumph of the Western drama."<sup>21</sup> Thus there was a serious interest in the drama

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<sup>20</sup>*Cumberland's British Theatre* is a series of 39 volumes, printed from the acting copies, as performed at the Theatres Royal, London, 1826-38.

<sup>21</sup>September 27, 1839.



as such in this young community in the 'thirties and 'forties. Of course, part of almost every evening's entertainment was given over to a short performance of some comical farce such as "The Artful Dodger," "The Golden Farmer" or "Vell Vot of It?", but the dignified drama had a more prominent place. Reviewers mention one and another of the plays as milestones in the western theatre. McKenzie was hailed as "the establisher of the drama in the Far West." With "Cherry and Fairstar" acclaimed a triumph of the Western drama, "Mazeppa" considered wonderful for a new country, and casts and theatres unusually brilliant for the size of the city, Chicago was taking real interest in the theatre. Along with what must have been very ordinary, there was entertainment on a definitely higher plane. On the whole it is significant that so much was good; and that the work of Shakespeare and Sheridan was so early available to outlying settlements, despite the necessarily uneven merit of the performance. The newspapers of 1852, were advertising a "new play called 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'," dramatized by Mrs. Anna Marble.

The cosmopolitan character of education in Chicago was exhibited before the end of the second decade of the nineteenth century. Although an Easterner was early hired to teach the children at the fort, from 1816 to 1830 children were educated in their homes.<sup>22</sup> At the latter date various teachers from the East began to set up schools in the town. Miss Eliza Chappel, who had originally come from Rochester, New York, succeeded in attracting twenty-five students. Another school was set up by G. T. Sproat, whose home was in Boston. Equipment in these early schools was very meagre. A numeral frame, a map of the United States, and of the world, a globe, scriptural texts and hymns, and illustrations of geometry and astronomy

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<sup>22</sup>Shepherd Johnston, *Historical Sketches of the Public School System of the City of Chicago* (Chicago, 1880), pp. 1-4.



made up the sum of school supplies. Pupils from the wealthier families brought their own chairs with them.

As early as 1834, a public school system was established whereby a pro rata share of the income of the school funds [all but four of the 142 blocks in the school section had been sold in October, 1833, for less than \$40,000 (\$38,-619.47)] was applied on the expenses of the private schools. This share was generally enough to pay the running expenses, but the parents were expected to pay tuition. By 1850, Chicago had about thirty private or select schools and four public schools. The city was divided into several districts for public school purposes, each district hiring a room in a hall or church for classroom purposes. The first permanent brick school building designed especially for that use was erected in 1844-45. It was known as School No. 1 and in 1847 had six teachers, a principal, and between 600 and 800 students. These schools operated under extreme physical difficulties; district No. 4 had one ill-ventilated room in a store building in 1845; another school occupied the attic of a one-and-a-half story house with light from the gable end only. Early Chicagoans believed in going at their schooling with a vengeance. Until 1850, the year was divided into four quarters, five-and-a-half days per week. Then the change to a summer and Christmas vacation and five-day plan was made. In the period 1840-50, from 15 to 19 per cent of the people under 21 were in school, and the average daily attendance was 62% of the entire enrollment. By 1849, the school inspectors were talking about having "spacious well-regulated school-rooms," increasing library facilities, contracting to buy 1,000 slates to be attached to the primary school desks, and planning the construction of permanent brick buildings to cost as much as \$7,000. At this time, about 1845, Chicago was spending \$8.42 per capita for education; Boston, then a city of more than 100,000, with an intellectual reputation



for owning Emerson and Harvard University, now over 200 years old, was spending only \$14 per capita on its students.

The teaching force was cosmopolitan in character. That it was recruited largely from the East was perhaps an expedient to meet a frontier demand. The immediate region was not yet old enough to produce individuals of intellectual prestige. Of the teachers of the late forties and early fifties, the principals were largely men, the assistants being women. John D. Philbrick of New Britain, Connecticut, was offered a job at \$1,500 yearly; John C. Dorr, who had been principal of the Boylston grammar school, was succeeded by William H. Wells, who had been principal of a Normal School at Westfield, Massachusetts. One Catherine Beecher organized committees of women in eastern cities to undertake the work of transferring prepared teachers to the West. Harriet N. Burns went to Chicago with the first class of teachers sent out in 1847. She reported, "We went to Boston, thence to Albany where . . . we were given lessons in different branches by several teachers . . . Miss Beecher gave instruction in regard to health and climate, how to preserve the former and resist exposure to the latter. In Chicago we were received into families until schools were formed and assigned to us."<sup>23</sup> By 1852, there were six male and twenty-four female teachers in Chicago, and they well earned the salaries of \$400 to \$1,500 which they received. The pupil-load was often as high as 83 per teacher. As early as 1842 there were such special teachers as music supervisors.

Not only was the teaching staff from the East, but the texts they used were of eastern origin. The fact that uniform and standard texts were prescribed as early as 1840 meant that frontier boys and girls at their improvised

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<sup>23</sup>J. S. Currey, *Chicago: Its History and Its Builders* (5 vols., Chicago, 1912), I, p. 237.



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soap-box desks and in the midst of a partially crude and untutored populace were exposed to an intellectual influence similar to that in eastern states. Worcester's *Primer and Readers*, Parley's First, Second, and Third Books of History, Frost's *Elements of English Grammar*, Parker's *Progressive Exercises in Composition*, Greenleaf's *Natural Arithmetic* and even Bailey's *Algebra* were used alike in the East and in the frontier town of the early 'forties. Whether he lived in the New York of Irving Cooper and Bryant or in the Chicago of bear fights and Potawatami Indians, the young American studied the same lofty moral lessons against stealing to be found in Worcester's *Reader*,<sup>24</sup> the same admonitions in regard to love and virtue and forgiveness as he parsed the noble sentences according to the syntactical parsing table in Frost's *Grammar*;<sup>25</sup> the same precepts of industry to be found in the Jones' *Analytical Spelling Books*: "Oh how I like to read my book and be a good child, and mind what my pa and ma tell me," the same inspiration to patriotism and public works advocated by *The Young Tyro's Instructor*.

"Boys must learn to spell, read and write,  
And try to learn with all their might;  
Then they will be wise, good and great  
And in due time may serve the state."<sup>26</sup>

Numerous references to classical personages and works as well as the mention of such subjects as algebra, history, Latin, etc., show that frontier education followed a pattern then accepted in the East. Incorporated in 1837, lectures with dissection exercises were soon being given at Rush Medical College; high schools were being agitated; and,

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<sup>24</sup>Clifton Johnson, *Old Time Schools and School Books* (New York, 1925), p. 245; Samuel Worcester, *First Lessons in English Grammar* (Gloucester, 1827).

<sup>25</sup>John Frost, *Elements of English Grammar with Progressive Exercises in Parsing* (Boston, 1835). Exercises to parse: "a good man, an undutiful son, a fertile country, sound statesmen, excellent behaviour, genuine repentance, each true patriot, all free citizens, our own countrymen, Happy America," pp. 58-9.

<sup>26</sup>*The Young Tyro's Instructor* (New York, 1834), in Johnson, p. 224.



in the early 'fifties the founding of Northwestern University with law and Bible departments mirrored a frontier desire to build an institution which would rival Yale and Harvard in the East. According to Shepherd Johnson, by 1852 the schools were open to rich and poor; every expense, save for books, was paid from the school fund or raised by taxation.

That books were being read during the period 1830-50 is evident from bookstore advertising and from newspaper references to a book bindery.<sup>27</sup> What kind of reading tastes had this frontier folk of the 'forties? What were they accustomed to read when their day's work building civilization out of prairie and wilderness was done? In 1839, the S. F. Gale bookstore was advertising among other things, Wyatt's *Natural History*, *Selections from German Literature*, Tucker's *Theory of Money and Banks*, Graham's *Lectures on the Science of Human Life*, *The Northmen in England; or America in the Tenth Century* by Joshua Smith, and two lives of William Henry Harrison, one by Burr and the other by Hildreth. Among the works of fiction, Gale's advertisement listed a number of more or less suspiciously thrilling titles such as *Wan Darrell or the Gypsy Mother*, *Hamilton King or the Smuggler and the Dwarf*, *Piccola or Captivity Captive*. At the same time there appeared a good number of the works of Shakespeare, Cooper, and Dickens.<sup>28</sup> In 1846, Gale's successors advertised a large stock of school, classical, and miscellaneous books, a circulating library of 1,600 volumes and such eastern periodicals as the *New York Mirror*, *Ladies' Companion*, *Emigrant and Old Countryman*, *New World*, and *New York Weekly Chronicle*.<sup>29</sup> Despite the fact that frontier taste may have run in

<sup>27</sup>By September, 1837, A. H. Burley was operating a circulating library; *Chicago Democrat*, July 1, 1840.

<sup>28</sup>*Daily Chicago American*, August 30, 1839; July 18, 1840; *Chicago Democrat*, July 1, 1840; May 5, 1841.

<sup>29</sup>*Chicago Democrat*, July 1, 1840.



part to brilliantly colored tales of adventure and intrigue, it is a patent fact that S. F. Gale could not have afforded to advertise, months at a time, the works of Dickens and Cooper and Shakespeare if he had had no market for them.

Lyceum lectures found a ready audience in Chicago during the 'forties. J. N. Balestier spoke in a "lively and graphic" style upon the fever of speculation in Chicago. Later Lucy Stone was lecturing on the "social and political disabilities of women" (1853). George W. Curtis treated of Alcibiades; Bishop Alonzo Potter of Pennsylvania elaborated oratorically upon the character of George Washington. A number of libraries were founded in the period. The Chicago Lyceum had 400 volumes in 1843. At the same time, the Young Men's Association, organized in 1841, had a reading room and library in the third story of the Saloon Building. They sponsored public lectures which were eagerly attended in the winter months. By the late 'fifties, 1,500 young men belonged to this organization, the objects of which were to "establish and maintain a Reading room and Library, and to procure literary and scientific lectures to promote the intellectual improvement of its members." The reading room had been leased at a rental of \$125 per year and supplied with the principal publications and periodicals of the day. Beside 119 novel titles, the library catalogue shows the existence of foreign reviews, 26 titles in philosophy, 56 titles of drama and poetry (with surprisingly few American authors other than Longfellow, Lowell, Bryant, and Whittier), many public documents, 49 titles of scientific works, and a great number of biographies, histories, and classical literary works.<sup>30</sup> Within a week of the time that Mark Skinner circulated the subscription paper organizing the association, 150 had paid in advance.

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<sup>30</sup>*Memorials of the Old Chicago Library, formerly Young Men's Association* (Chicago, 1878), pp. 9, 36-8.



Early journalism was fraught with difficulties; yet the content and makeup of the papers suggest the cosmopolitan character of the community. In 1833 John Calhoun of Watertown, New York, came to Chicago, himself lathed his newspaper office, got 147 subscribers and began to publish the *Chicago Democrat*, at least when the weather in and roads to this quite inaccessible city were good enough to allow the paper to get through. By 1854 there were seven dailies, fifteen weeklies, and six monthlies and bi-monthlies. Established in quantity consistent with the expansive ideas of frontier speculators, the newspapers mirror in Chicago a touch with the outside world which belies the existence of the provincialism which might be expected on the frontier. Calhoun, like the editors of other short-lived frontier enterprises, published in a one-room office over a store, doing all the work himself, using a hand-press and later employing a horse attached to an ingenious contrivance for power. Worrying over the lateness of the supplies that were held up because of bad roads, and plagued by the financial instability and over-enthusiasm of his frontier subscribers, he nevertheless produced a sheet which was certainly more cosmopolitan than any small town publication of the present day. Cartoons satirizing the election of 1840, literary clippings, foreign news and exchanges, business directories, and local advertising offer a faithful picture of commercial Chicago of the time. The heterogenous social tone of the community is reflected in the advertisement of pocket pistols, powder flasks, shot pouches, measuring tapes, and fowling pieces on the one hand and dancing pumps and opera gaiters on the other.<sup>31</sup> On October 23, 1843, the Chicago Dancing Academy advertised fifteen lessons for four dollars and a season of five assemblies for six dollars "all of which will be conducted

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<sup>31</sup>Chicago *Democrat*, June 3, 1835; Chicago *American*, January 3, 1840.



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strictly moral."<sup>32</sup> National advertising abounded. Hay's liniment, Oldridge's Balm of Columbia for the hair, and Phelps's Arcanum to be applied to anything from eyes to ulcers were nationally-advertised products; while the producers of Brandreth's Vegetable Universal pills made an especial plea to western folks, advertising their drug as a "certain and speedy cure for fever and ague, bilious fever, and all the diseases incident to a newly settled country."<sup>33</sup> In the columns of this paper which was publishing advertising to appeal to a frontier population were nevertheless found passages of French poetry, country-wide news letters, market quotations, lives of Homer, Shakespeare, and Handel, dispatches from Europe, and exchanges from numerous southern and eastern newspapers. Undoubtedly the bulk of the matter was used to serve a filler purpose, because the overworked editor had not had time to gather and set into type more news of the local community. Nevertheless, his choice of filler was invariably of a kind which speeded the transmission of culture into the West.

Most of the prominent papers had an editorial policy colored by their political leanings; local elections were treated always in the light of their national significance. The *Democrat* with its motto "Our Country and its settlers" was Democratic. The *Tribune*, which bore on its masthead the caption "Thou shalt not bear false witness," was in the late 'forties becoming the nucleus around which the Republican party was to form. Both carried political news, editorials, and party propaganda which showed them to be keenly in touch with political movements the country over. These papers laid some pretensions to a column of dramatic criticism. Some of the other and less lasting papers made still greater claim to culture. In 1842, the

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<sup>32</sup>Chicago *Democrat*, October 25, 1843.

<sup>33</sup>Chicago *Democrat*, July 1, 1840.



*Quid Nunc*, the first penny paper west of the Alleghenies, announced that it would seek to "advance the cause of Literature, the Fine Arts, Science, Commerce, Agriculture, and the Mechanical Arts; combined with such other topics of local and general interest as circumstances may from time to time give rise to." Although the last lived only to the tender age of thirty-seven issues, Chicago's early newspaper history shows that the "hit and miss" journalistic efforts of the time were a factor in keeping interest in eastern culture alive in the West.

Of musical matters there is not much existing evidence. There must, however, have been considerable musical interest, beyond that in the fiddle which from the first was a commercial necessity to every inn like the Sauganash or Green Tree Tavern. The first piano was brought out in about 1834, the Harmonic Society gave its first concert in 1835, a concert for the poor was given in 1840, a public school music supervisor was engaged in 1842. In July, 1850, preparations for grand opera were being made for the first time; and in 1852, Patti came in concert. A full orchestra and Philharmonic Society existed in the 'fifties. There was evolution here from home concert to semi-professional work, and then a move from professional to frankly amateur productions. By 1850, Chicagoans had an occasional opportunity to see paintings brought in from the outside; by the end of that decade a project for a free art gallery was under way.

That Chicago came by 1850 to be known as the "City of Churches," suggests the speed by which higher impulses of a religious nature were gratified in the frontier community. In the early 'thirties, social meetings, debate societies, and fairs were held in the churches; and benefit concerts were occasionally sponsored. On November 5, 1849, the Chicago Orphan Asylum was incorporated and in December 28, 1849, the Illinois General Hospital of the



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Lake. As early as 1838, the city government had set aside a permanent park.

According to Board of Trade figures, Chicago's population leaped from seventy in 1830 to over 26,000 in 1850; there were over 112,000 in 1860. In nearly every five-year period the population more than doubled. During this generation, then, the process of civilization was going on there at a very rapid rate. Accounts of foreign travelers, not always too objective, reported a prevailing crudity that would suggest slight cultural advance. A Canadian business man acknowledged the city to be in 1857 "the ruling market in western commercial operations. It follows necessarily," he said, "that there is much wealth, much hospitality, great display, and lavish living. But here we stop. Everybody knows everybody. The press is unknown out of the state of Illinois. The two theatres are notable enough edifices but neither is sufficiently lighted, while the acting is not what one would go across the street to see; for there is no censorship, no criticism upon it: no inducements for merit to be diligent. Literature there is none."<sup>34</sup> Such travel accounts have been reflected in later estimates of frontier society. Edgar Lee Masters recently reported of Chicago that "when building a town, men cannot think much of aesthetics. In mud and confusion, in awkward inconvenience . . . business naturally occupied their days, and was the only solvent of existence. . . . Play and beauty might be well enough later on . . .; but not now."<sup>35</sup> The western traveler of the 'thirties and 'forties was inclined to stress the material side of western accomplishment and deprecate the cultural development. Yet as Professor Craven points out, "material and spiritual things possessed a strange unity in the early middle west."<sup>36</sup> Despite the crudeness of the frontier setting, evidences of the higher

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<sup>34</sup>*Development of Chicago*, p. 218.

<sup>35</sup>Masters, pp. 84-5.

<sup>36</sup>Avery Craven, "The Advance of Civilization Into the Middle West", in *Sources of Culture in the Middle West*, edited by D. R. Fox (New York, 1934), p. 64.



life were there as we have seen; and they found support at a remarkably early date. It was a "chance" type of culture; permanent cultural expression awaited adequate population and accumulation of capital. Yet it was significant that in the period of beginnings—in the first two decades after the population exceeded less than a hundred people—provisions to meet the higher needs of the individual experienced marked growth: a cosmopolitan educational system, with eastern teachers and texts, newspapers with more exchanges than local news, more national than local advertising, book and magazine facilities which made work of a high literary standard quite universally available, lyceum programs drawing upon distinguished outsiders, theatrical tastes which made the sponsoring of prominent dramatic talent and an English repertoire a profitable undertaking, interest in parks, and the beginnings of philanthropy. Westward pioneers were not simply building a new material existence in the wilderness. Almost simultaneously with their physical development of frontier town life, they were enriching the frontier region with those higher tastes which they had had in the East. Proof of the existence of these tastes furnishes an illustration both of the transmission of culture into the western scene and of the agencies by which things not entirely material were secured to western society. It suggests, moreover, that if Chicago was then not unlike other towns near the westward-moving edge of civilization of the day, there was existent in frontier communities a cultural desire and a yearning for the expression and realization of the so-called higher life which belies somewhat the prevailing impression of frontier society left by the travelers' accounts<sup>37</sup> and more than ever points to an existing and continuous tie-up between eastern culture and western society.

<sup>37</sup> "Chicago has . . . with all her wealth, no public park or other provision for outdoor recreation. She has no gallery of Art, or the beginning of one—no establishment of music—no public library—no social institution whatever, except the church." Anonymous, written in 1858. *Development of Chicago*, p. 223.



## A MERCHANT OF EARLY CHICAGO

### Four Letters of Eri Baker Hulbert

*Edited by*

*ELIZABETH WYANT*

Eri Baker Hulbert (March 11, 1807-June 9, 1852) was the son of an Otsego County, New York, farmer, Ambrose Hulbert, and his first wife, Dorothy Baker Hulbert. In 1831, he married a girl of the same district, Mary Louisa Walker (February 24, 1810-November 27, 1874), and they resided in Burlington Flats, New York. Glowing reports of the "western world" reached him through his brothers-in-law, Almond and Charles Walker who had visited Chicago on business in 1834 and 1835. A partnership was arranged and in 1836 E. B. Hulbert embarked for Chicago to take charge of the Walker & Co. store which handled farming implements as well as a general stock of goods. The trip took sixteen days; his transportation included a day on the canal packet from Utica to Buffalo, a week's rough voyage to Detroit, and then instead of "gliding along over the territory easily seated in a stage coach on a good road [he found himself] subjected to tramping on foot, with the mud up to [his] knees, and when riding obliged to content himself in an old mud waggon without anything to protect [him] from the incessant storm." Excerpts from letters written to his wife will tell the reader of his first impressions of Chicago.

Mrs. Hulbert with her little boy, William Ambrose, joined her husband the following year, and Chicago became



their home. They were devoted to the First Baptist Church where Mr. Hulbert was a deacon for many years. Two more boys were added to the family in subsequent years.

Walker & Co. weathered the panic of 1837 and in 1838 was the first company to export grain to the East from Chicago, which was later to become the greatest grain market of the world. The shipment consisted of thirty-nine bags of wheat which were sent to Buffalo on the steamer *Great Western*, their destination being Charles Walker's mills in Burlington Flats.

The Chicago *Morning Democrat* for February 27, 1840, carried the following advertisement:

C. WALKER

SOUTH WATER STREET CHICAGO

between Dearborn and State Streets

wholesale dealer in LEATHER GROCERIES  
HARDWARE DOMESTICS: sheetings, pilot cloth,  
calicoes, flannels, socks, and mittens, &c.&c. Fools cap  
and letter paper Threshing machines, fanning mills,  
double waggon, whiffle trees, neck yokes, &c.&c.  
Pork, flour and salt 500,000 ft. pine lumber, different  
kinds.

Although the partnership of Walker and Hulbert dissolved in 1841, Mr. Hulbert remained a merchant in Chicago until 1851, when a disastrous fire laid all the buildings in which he had invested in ruins. This bad fortune prompted his desire to establish himself in the "land of gold." He sailed May 5, 1852, for California via the Isthmus, taking a Singer Sewing Machine for use in the leather business. During several weeks' wait in Nicaragua for the Pacific boat, he contracted the fever and died June 5, 1852.



## A MERCHANT OF EARLY CHICAGO

His three sons spent most of their lives in Chicago. William A. Hulbert and George Hulbert were both members of the Chicago Board of Trade; the former was later president of the National League of baseball. Eri Baker Hulbert II was a Baptist minister and at the founding of the University of Chicago, became the dean of the Divinity School.

CHICAGO

Nov. 10, 1836

. . . Arrived in 7 days from Detroit the 8th of October at Chicago, am much pleased with the place, have formed considerable acquaintances, much disappointed as regards the morals of the inhabitants, find many good hearted friends amongst my new acquaintances, find many devoted Christians and apparently much engaged in the cause of our blessed Master, the Baptist more particular as they are doing a great deal for so small a number and by no means wealthy, for instance, the Society Nos but 65 communicants, they are paying their Pastor (Br Hinton) \$500 per year and building a nice Brick Church 60 by 90 ft, have got the foundation laid, (I am appointed one of the building committee). Br Hinton preaches to us every Sabbath besides Lecturing in the evening and on Wensdays and Friday evenings regularly, Sabbath evenings Lectures on the authenticity of the Scriptures which course he intends to follow through the winter. Subjects that I have heard him Lecture on, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the plagues of Egypt, the flight of the Children of Israel and the delivery of the Laws to Moses on Sinai (very interesting) was introduced to Br Hinton in a day or two after I came into town, he is an Englishman by birth, not easy in his oratory but deals plainly with his hearers and warns them faithfully to flee from the wrath to come and not to make money their God, a man much devoted and much engaged. I dined with him and family week ago last Sabbath, think him rather aristocratic in his notions and manners, but apar-



ently a very warm friend he is at my store every day or two, does his trading with me had an invitation Wednesday Eve to attend a party at his house, got started but met E Brown and A Clark on the way and did not attend but returned to store and spent the evening with them (very glad to see anybody that ever saw Burlington) I board at the Tremont House, pay now \$4.00 pr week, lodge in store sometimes alone, sometimes company, a Mr Huntington from Watertown Jefferson Co, is now lodging with me, board has now advanced to \$6.00 to 7.00 and will probably go higher as provisions are high and scarce, flour \$15.00 pr bbl, Butter 44 cts chees 20 cts and everything else in the same proportion flour will bring \$30 pr bbl before spring as there is none in market scarcely and none coming I contracted my board at \$4.00 until July next. I have enjoyed good health ever since I left Home except Rheumatism which I am now rid of. Chicago I believe is a very healthy place—there are a few cases of Bilious Fever now in town but none dangerous as I know of. Joseph Matteson was taken down the next [day] after I came into town but is now in the store again. The only prevailing disease I have heard of in town is the Prairie Itch & that appears to be pretty general. You will like to know how I like the country and as you charged me not [to] lie to you I will tell you the truth on the subject. Until I reached the Western part of Michigan I thought it the hardest country I ever saw but when I reached White Pigeon Prairie I began to see something that my imagination could never paint notwithstanding the aid of Description that I had recd from others, but when I came upon other Prairies far superior in beauty and magnitude I was struck with wonder and amazement that such Land should have remained so long unpeopled and that Farmers in Otsego Co should remain upon their cold hard farms when there was such vast quantities of this land unoccupied, and as rich as land can be and not stone to be seen, (I need say no more). . . .



CHICAGO

Dec. 29, 1836

. . . As regards the health of Chicago I do not know why it is not as healthy as Otsego, save the sudden changes that occur during the summer season from heat to cold which are said to be very frequent and as regards water I think there is no need of using much and that if got from the Lake is as good as ours and I think the greatest difficulty in their water in this place is the infernal Brandy they put into it to make it healthy but they are beginning to learn wisdom and [it] is said there is not  $\frac{1}{2}$  the Liquor drank that there has been formerly and I should think so from the immense quantity now in town and the many Merchants that are offering to sell out their stocks of Liquor at cost also I learn there is quite a large Temperance Society in town and are increasing very fast. Our Religious Societies are doing a very great deal and seem to be wide awake. Our Baptist Society is daily increasing in numbers either by Letter or by baptism, two young men were baptised some two or three weeks ago and four recd the right hand of fellowship last Sabbath, one from the Methodist Church which was immersed by them. Will erect a brick church next season. Cost \$12000. The Episcopalians have their church nearly completed. Cost \$10 or \$12000. The Presbyterians put up one next summer, they have subscribed for theirs now \$45000, five men in town subscribed \$3000 each, this is the way they do business in this new country, and I tell them should Chas A Madison property prove worth the \$100,000 represented they must crack on \$1000 on him for the building of the baptist House. Just tell him to square himself if he pleases. I am now boarding at the Tremont House where I first commenced, have to pay \$5.00 per week, what you would think most extortionate in York State but it is as low as I can get it at a Publick House and cannot get it less than \$4 $\frac{1}{2}$  at a private House and go  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from store. Some Public Houses charge \$11 where they lodge them and



I am getting used to paying high prices and do not mind it though I suppose that 4 or 5 Dollars is about as cheap as they can afford it, the way they use up a fellows money here is a caution, for instance, \$10. \$15 and \$25 (if the sleigh and horses are pretty nice) for riding 4 miles and back with Gentleman and Lady, thus you see money is of but little consequence in this Western World although some are paying as high as 365 per cent to get money to pay their debts finally. This is the finest country in the world for making money and I have no doubt had I now \$10,000 I could double it by June next and perhaps thrible it, *But Enough*. I see a great many old acquaintance in Chicago from different quarters and such meetings are very friendly I assure you. I frequently have persons call on me when they come into town with whom I never had much acquaintance and when we meet here we are not long before we form a perfect acquaintance. . . .

CHICAGO

Feb. 16, 1837

. . . Will first give you a short scetch of my late tour into the country some 80 or 90 miles, the hospitality of the inhabitants, their habitations—the prolificacy of the women, their contentedness &c. Left Chicago on the 2nd Feby for Geneva Lake W Teritory in Company with Judge Brown Doct H Clarke Col Maxwell and a Mr Miller was absent 7 days during which time we traveled over a country which begs all description—nothing but the naked eye can have any conceptions of its beauty, imagination cannot paint it, untill the eye has seen it or the like. The country is mostly prarie with now and then a grove interspersed over it, but in some places you are out of sight of timber, the Praries being so large, the settlements in all cases in or about the groves and the praries



the handsomest farming lands you ever saw. There are two kinds of Prarie, that denominated the rolling by some are considered the best, the level prarie is not generally dry as the other and about the valley they generally have the best water, found in all cases the inhabitants very Hospitable indeed would even lie on the floor themselves to accomodate travelers. Their Houses are invariably built of logs and covered with Bark or rive slatslike barrel staves, the doors shelves and floors of the same material, their being no saw mills in the country. In many of their Houses there was no floor at all but right on the bare ground. The women (like the country) are very prolific, not one that I saw while I was gone that had not a child at the breast, was in a fair way to soon, and the Doct happened along just in the right time for bleeding, which retarded our progress very much in travel. We made it a point to call at every house we passed and make all necessary enquiries. Did not find a woman in our whole travels that would acknowledge that they were discontented or desired to return to the land from whence they came. We found settlers from most of the New England States, Virginia, N York, Pennsylvania, &c but all seemed contented with their new homes, notwithstanding their deprivations of many of the necessaries and luxuries of life and exchanging of comfortable habitations for the open Log Cabin and the loss of civilized Society for that of their own domestic firesides alone, in many cases being 10 miles from any other inhabitants whatever. The people where we traveled were perfectly healthy and had been ever since they came into the country, and I am well satisfied that the country is as healthy as York State generally, but the habits of the people are different and they are at present more exposed, but let Otsego folks expose themselves as they do here and they would have been all dead before this time. At the head of Lake Geneva W.T. we each of us made us a claim of 800 acres apiece, part Prairie and part Timber and good springs of water on them, the Co.



ELIZABETH WYANT

will break up some 60 or 80 acres on each claim this season, and on mine I intend to go to farming some day unless Chas should go into business about right or to my mind, and wishes to retain me as partner, in that case shall probably live in Chicago for awhile, but intend to hold on to my claim anyhow, and go on to improving it. I am now alone and sleep alone in my store, board at Tremont House, pay \$5.00 pr week, not doing much in the goods line now, do not expect to till the ground settles, money intolerable scarce and hard to get hold of. Expecting better times soon, have done very well in the produce business, cleared on that alone some \$600 or \$700 and could do twice as much but for the want of funds. Shall do very well in my Milwaukee purchase I think, have been offered to day \$750 advance, but have but little doubt but that between this and June or July can clear \$2000. Shall not sell at any rate yet as Milwaukee property is going ahead like fun. . . .

CHICAGO

May 21, 1837

. . . I am in hopes . . . that you are about to start for the Western World as I feel that I shall spend the rest of my days in this quarter, if not in a business life, as a farmer on uncle Sams farm, perhaps both, time must determine. Still a farm I am determined on, and have engaged 80 acres prairie broken this season on my claim at Geneva Lake which place is settling very fast with Otsego folks and of a respectable kind too. Nine left here for that place last week all from Otsego, *actual settlers*. Mr. Furguson amongst the rest and is going to take his family there as soon as they arrive, has now gone to build him a house to live in. George Clark from Cooperstown & wife have gone on. Mr Joseph Griffin Jr is coming on with his family from Coops. and there will be a first rate so-



ciety there soon, and all from Old Otsego. Uncle Sam Treat & Reuben have been up there to look, well pleased and think they shall go there this spring, although not fully determined when they left here. What my course of business will be I do not know, may continue with Chas at Chicago should everything prove right when he comes here. Should you come out with him you will not need to bring much with you as the transportation will be more than the articles will cost here. Chas can advise about that, furthermore they do not use much furniture here. At the best I want you to bring Wm A with you. Times are excessive hard here as you will see from my communications to Chas still nothing in comparison with the East I suppose. Cannot conceive why it is that so many of our good folks will grub away on their old worn out hill farms when there is such a vast extent of unsettled country West as rich as rich can be and that to be obtained at 10s per acre and nothing to do to it but plow & fence before raising a crop. I am thinking should Father Walker come out here and see our prairies and learn the price which all kinds of produce fetches he would rather dispose his present possessions and then he would soon become a resident of Illinois. I have but one thing that ties me to old Otsego, that is the loss of relatives, friends, and society, but could they be removed here I should have no desire to see that place again. Although we have a first rate Society of Christian friends in this place still they do not as yet seem quite as near as the old. There is a gradual increase in our church here by Letters and 2 weeks ago two were added by baptism (Capt. Turner & Wife). Br Hinton takes the preference with all classes as to scholarship, History, soundness of judgment, &C and from the course he takes draws large houses after him especially at his Lectures, generally selects the incidents of the day for subjects. Next Sabbath eveny he lectures upon the Religious Morral to be drawn from the present commercial embarrassment, which no doubt will bring a full house. I per-



ceive my friends are all growling about my not writing them. Shall open my trunk tomorrow and let Lorren witness the No of  $\frac{1}{2}$  filled sheets to Father H, Almond, &C and the different dates, have oft made the attempt to write but before finishing some one would come in want a  $\frac{1}{4}$   $\frac{1}{2}$  or a bushel of oats corn or potatos or a little tea sugar or coffee or something else and break me off and then it was hard work to get them round again. Apparently they all think I have nothing to do but write letters but let them undertake to get along alone, watch the streets, tend store, buy in stuff and peddle it out again and that by pecks and run up stairs 50 times a day they would find something to do besides write letters. I have frequently run up stairs till I would fairly hate to see a man come into the store with a bag in his hand although very fond of trading, but enough if Lorren stays a few days with me I will try to answer all their desires in that respect as soon as may be. . . .



## HISTORICAL NOTE

### AN OLD ADOBE HOUSE

Three miles northeast of Virginia, Illinois, at the edge of Sugar Grove, there stands a beautiful and spacious house built of adobe. So far as is known this house—"Allandale," home of the Cunningham family for several generations—is the only adobe house in Illinois; nor is it probable that there is anywhere in the central states another house constructed of this material so commonly used in Mexico and the dry southwest.

In 1834, Andrew Cunningham, a young Scotchman, left his native land to try his fortunes in America. His plan was to establish a tannery, and upon coming to what is now Cass County, Illinois, during the following summer, he sought a location affording a convenient supply of water and oak timber.

These two essentials to the process of tanning were found in abundance where Job's Creek (named for Archibald Job, the first settler in the Virginia neighborhood, who soon was elected to the legislature and was one of the three commissioners who supervised the building of the first state house at Springfield) flows through Sugar Grove; and here Mr. Cunningham erected the tannery that is still remembered by old timers as one of the most important institutions of the early days in this country—a center to which men came from as far as Beardstown, Jacksonville, Petersburg and Springfield for many years to buy harness, saddles and footwear. Not until sometime after the Civil War, when its usefulness had plainly been served, was the tannery abandoned. No trace of it remains.



## HISTORICAL NOTE

Mr. Cunningham also acquired many acres of land near by, and after living for several years in a small house on this land, decided to build a larger one. Here he was confronted with one of the common problems of the pioneer—the transportation of suitable building material; and being a man of great industry and resourcefulness, with a mind well stored with practical information, he solved this problem in a very individual manner.

Taking common mud and mixing it with ground tan-bark, using hair scraped from hides before tanning as a binder, he molded large blocks (6 by 12 by 18 inches), and baked them in the sun. The result was satisfactory, and from these adobe bricks a substantial and well proportioned two-story house, having nine large rooms, besides two broad halls, was built. Upon completion the exterior was given a coating of cement plaster for protection against a possibly unfavorable effect of the Illinois climate. Overhanging eaves—supported by braces of ironwork beautifully designed by Mr. Cunningham himself, who had a strong artistic sense—were added for further protection against the weather, and gave as well a pleasing balance to the architectural lines.

In this distinctive house, completed in 1852 and named in honor of his wife, who had been Miss Helen Allan, Mr. Cunningham lived, with his family, for many years, widely known for his upright character and untiring enterprise—truly one of those worthy pioneers whose

“... earnest efforts still command  
Our veneration.”

As he grew older, with the busy tanyard a thing of the past, he continued to superintend his large estate, but spent more and more of his time in his library—often carving, in choice specimens of wood, excellent little images of the mythological or other characters about which he read in



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his books. In 1895, at the ripe old age of eighty-eight years, he passed on, and was buried in a little country graveyard a mile away.

A son, Mr. James A. Cunningham, next lived out a long and useful life in the old house, engaged in farming and stock raising, and beloved of the entire countryside; and here he, too, died, in 1927, and was laid to rest beside his father. James A. Cunningham was an interested member of the Illinois State Historical Society.

The present occupant of the house is Miss Hilma Jones, a granddaughter of the builder. As far as possible the original furnishings have been retained, and the old rooms, quaint with low ceilings and many-paned windows deepset in the thick walls, are everywhere pervaded with an atmosphere of simple, homelike comfort. On every hand are objects of unusual interest—hardly outside of a museum would one find more such objects—yet no one of them but has some family association.

Over the livingroom mantel, for example, flanking an old-fashioned clock, are two exquisite miniatures—a lady and a gentleman of an earlier generation—done by Janet Cunningham Shaen, a sister of Andrew Cunningham; and the mistress of the house will tell you about this artist great-aunt, who lived in England, and about her friendship with the Charles Darwins and their daughter, who were her neighbors there. And on the shelf below is a curious figurine—some ancient warrior clad in chain armor—carved with exceeding delicacy in gold and carnelian, which was given to a Cunningham greatuncle while serving as a British consul in Turkey more than a hundred years ago, by a Russian ambassador whom he met there at that time.

And there is one of a brace of “carriage pistols,” a common accessory in traveling overland from borough to borough in Scotland in former times; and a very old sea-



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chest, which accompanied some ancestor to America long ago.

But best of all are the books—rows and rows of them in cases about the wall, and in one adorable cabinet fashioned by Miss Jones herself—who has inherited full measure of the Cunningham artistic skill—from the old grandfather clock. Many of these volumes were part of the original library of the house—books current in Andrew Cunningham's day, as Herndon's *Life of Lincoln* in three volumes, and Ford's *History of Illinois*; and books much older—a Scottish dictionary, published in Edinburgh in 1808; a little old Swedish hymnal, Gothenborg, 1807; a book called *The Beauties of Washington Irving*, Glasgow, 1825, most quaintly illustrated by William Heath; and a copy of *The Tattler*, published in London as long ago as 1728.

But even more cherished than any of these is a small book whose yellowed pages are filled with fine and neat but faded script—the diary that Andrew Cunningham kept during his voyage from Scotland in 1834, and across the states and in Illinois during the summer of that year and the next. The story of the eight weeks at sea, the landing at New York and journey up into Canada by way of the Erie Canal (then newly completed), and the traveling about by stage coach or on foot, visiting many small towns that are now well known cities of Ontario and the states—this story, after the lapse of a hundred years, is fascinating to read.

It is interesting to note his pleasure when first he saw the wide prairies of Illinois, where waving grass was starred with myriad wildflowers. The settlements, too, interested and pleased him—Alton, for example, with aspirations of becoming the state capital, there being already “a good many stores in the village”; Peoria, “a very young but thriving town”; and Chicago, which, he said, “promises well”!

One wishes that Mr. Cunningham had left some written record of his early years at Sugar Grove and the building of



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his home—this interesting old house of sun-dried brick, which is just now, after more than eighty years, beginning to crumble slightly. But one thing he did leave—a memento of pioneer days that is perhaps unique. On the front lawn of "Allandale," where a flower bed might be, is a circular space six or eight feet in diameter from which the original prairie grass—that tall, coarse grass which so impeded the progress of the ox-drawn wagons in which many of the earliest settlers arrived, and which offered such stubborn resistance to the plow—has never been uprooted.

As though he sensed that some time this bit of primitive Illinois would hold an almost pathetic interest, Mr. Cunningham never allowed scythe to touch it. His descendants have likewise preserved it, and there it is growing now—literally a living link between the present times and the days that are gone forever.

Virginia, Illinois

Lorene Martin



## HISTORICAL NEWS

The Illinois State Historical Society held its thirty-sixth annual meeting in Springfield on May 9, 1935. Departing from the custom of recent years, all sessions were held on one day. Business meetings of the Society and Board of Directors took place in the morning; three papers were presented in the afternoon; while the evening was devoted to the annual address, a showing of motion pictures of historical interest, and a reception to members and guests.

A full account of the business meetings will be published in the Society's *Transactions*. The same Board of Directors which has served during the past year was re-elected, but in accordance with an amendment to the constitution, adopted at the meeting, five of the directors will serve for one year, five for two years and five for three years. In the future five directors will be elected each year to serve three year terms. The Board of Directors elected the following officers: Dr. Otto L. Schmidt, President; James A. James, John H. Hauberg, George W. Smith, Theodore C. Pease, Evarts Boutell Greene and John McAuley Palmer, Vice Presidents; Paul M. Angle, Secretary-Treasurer.

At the afternoon session the following papers were presented:

"The Epic Historical Significance of President Lincoln"  
—W. E. Baringer.

"George Rogers Clark and Historians"—Temple Bodley.

"Culture in Illinois in Lincoln's Day"—Mrs. Florence W. Taylor.

At the evening session Mr. Earnest Elmo Calkins of New York City delivered the annual address. Taking the



title, "Genesis of a Railroad," Mr. Calkins spoke on the organization and early history of the Burlington Route. After his address Herbert Georg of Springfield presented three reels of motion pictures, beginning with scenes of the Illinois State Fair in 1915 and ending with the Beardstown flood of 1926. The meeting closed with a reception held in the Illinois State Historical Library.

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Cincinnati was the scene of the twenty-eighth annual meeting of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association, which met from April 25 to April 27. Papers presented included two by Illinoisans—"The West and National Agriculture in the Ante-Bellum Period," by H. A. Kellar of the McCormick Historical Association, and "The Valley as a Cause of the Seven Years' War," by Theodore C. Pease of the University of Illinois. James A. James of Northwestern University presided at one of the luncheons, and O. Fritiof Ander of Augustana College was chairman of the session on religious forces in Western history.

An attendance of sixty-five marked the annual meeting of the Morgan County Historical Society, held at the Colonial Inn, Jacksonville, on May 2. The evening was devoted to papers on two men who played prominent parts in the religious and educational history of Jacksonville—Peter Cartwright and Edward Beecher. Pres. C. P. McClelland of McMurray College read a paper on Cartwright, while Dr. Carl E. Black took Beecher for his subject. The Rev. McKendree Blair, Frank J. Heintz and Prof. F. B. Oxtoby participated in the discussion which followed.

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One of the youngest historical societies in the state is the DuPage County Historical Society. The society was formed at Hinsdale on March 28, and on April 28 more than fifty



citizens attended the first regular meeting, at which a board of directors and a president (Marshall Keig of Hinsdale) were chosen. At this meeting Lane K. Newberry of Downers Grove exhibited paintings of historic places in Northern Illinois and presented his painting of the old Fullersburg mill to the group. Miss Caroline McIlvaine, former director of the Chicago Historical Society, spoke on the history of the county.

The DuPage County Historical Society has already planned a thoroughgoing restoration of historic places in the county. Work has been begun on the old Fullersburg mill, near modern Hinsdale. The mill race and water wheel are to be rebuilt, and eventually the society plans to use the building as a museum. The Fullersburg Inn is to be restored, and also the old toll house and gate which were in use when the present Ogden Avenue was a plank road.

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An unusual publication entitled *Amos Williams and Early Danville, Illinois: Scrap Book*, was recently presented to the Illinois State Historical Library by the Woodbury family of Danville. The book contains a sketch of Amos Williams, Vermilion County pioneer, reproductions and transcripts of letters and documents from the Woodbury collection, and many notes about various phases of the county's history. The diverse character of the material included made planographing more feasible than letter-press printing. The volume is an interesting example of what can be done by this new and relatively inexpensive method of printing.

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Among the centennials celebrated by Illinois cities during the first six months of 1935, perhaps the most elaborate were those of Peru and Elgin.



Peru's centennial observances commenced on May 22 and ended on May 26. A home-coming and reunion drew thousands to the Illinois River city, merchants' windows were filled with reminders of the last century's history, while fireworks, fiddlers' contests and dances attracted large crowds. But the high point of the observance was a huge pageant in which 600 people participated. Starting with the days of the Indian and the French explorer, the pageant depicted life in Peru and its vicinity through the colorful nineteenth century decades of river and canal traffic to the era of modern industry. At the close of the week it was estimated that more people had been drawn to Peru than at any previous time in its history.

Four years of planning preceded Elgin's centennial celebration, which commenced on Sunday, June 16, with special services in the city's churches, and a sacred concert by a chorus of 100 voices. Monday, June 17, designated "Elgin Day," was marked by a parade; the crowning of Miss Marguerite Gifford, granddaughter of Elgin pioneers, as "Miss Elgin;" and the first performance of the historical pageant. The pageant, given by a cast of 700 on four successive evenings, opened with the passage of Marquette and Joliet through Illinois, and depicted outstanding episodes in Elgin's history to the present time. Not the least impressive feature of the celebration was the Centennial Edition of the *Elgin Courier-News*, issued on June 15, and containing 148 pages devoted in the main to Elgin's first century.

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Virginia, Illinois, the county seat of Cass County, celebrated its one hundredth anniversary on June 16. Originally named Hallville for its founder, Dr. Henry H. Hall, the town was later called Virginia, in honor of the Old Dominion, where Mrs. Hall had been born. Chief feature of Vir-



ginia's centennial was a reunion of the descendants of the founder.

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The conclusion of the first century of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Illinois was marked with impressive ceremonies at Peoria and Jubilee College on May 21. Hundreds, including many high dignitaries of the church, were in attendance, while greetings were received from President Roosevelt, Governor Horner, and others holding prominent positions in public life.

In the spring of 1835 Bishop Philander Chase arrived at Peoria to organize the diocese of Illinois. Soon afterward he commenced the establishment of Jubilee College a few miles distant. There he remained for the balance of his life. Appropriately, much of the centennial observance took place at Jubilee, which is now a state park. More than six hundred laity and clergy attended the banquet in Peoria with which the centennial concluded.

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Particularly timely, in view of the centennial of the Episcopal Church in Illinois, is a small book entitled *Jubilee: A Pioneer College*, by Roma Louise Shively of Galesburg. Miss Shively presents a comprehensive, well-documented account of Jubilee College from its founding until its decease. Prepared as a Master's thesis at the University of Minnesota, her study has been published by the Elmwood Gazette, Elmwood, Illinois.

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One of the first Illinois churches established by Bishop Chase was St. Paul's, in Springfield. On June 7, 1835, the Bishop held services in the home of George Forquer, and on the following day articles of association were adopted. On June 9, 1935, the church observed the completion of its first century.



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Particular interest attaches to St. Paul's Church by reason of the fact that one of its rectors, the Rev. Charles Dresser, officiated at the marriage of Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd. Less than two years later Lincoln purchased the Dresser home, which has now become one of the most historic houses in the United States.

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Another Springfield church which has recently completed its first century is the Westminster Presbyterian. On May 26, 1835, thirty members of the First Presbyterian Church, or Sangamo Presbyterian Church, as it was then called, asked for letters of dismission and requested Dr. John G. Bergen to organize a new church. Different opinions regarding slavery and theological questions, together with the personal eccentricities of the pastor, accounted for their action. The new church was known as the Second Presbyterian until 1919, when the name Westminster was adopted.

A week's program marked the centennial. Of especial interest were the historical address of the pastor, the Rev. Walter R. Cremeans, and the pageant presented on May 20. Beginning with the advent of Presbyterian missionaries to Illinois before the days of statehood, the pageant depicted significant events in the history of the church throughout its entire history.

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Seventy-five years ago the Illinois State Normal University at Normal graduated its first class. This year, from June 7 to June 18, the diamond jubilee was celebrated. Activities centered in Old Main, the oldest building in use in the United States for the training of teachers.

On April 12, 1935, Rene Cossitt, Jr., Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, unveiled a tablet



## HISTORICAL NEWS

at LaHarpe commemorating Lincoln's visit there on October 23, 1858, during the course of his campaign against Douglas for the Senatorship. Because of the inclement weather the dedication exercises were held in the Methodist Church, which is hereafter to be known as the Lincoln Methodist Episcopal Church of LaHarpe. Senator James C. Mayor opened the meeting and introduced the Secretary of the Illinois State Historical Society, who spoke on the significance of the Lincoln-Douglas Debates in the history of Illinois and the United States. The memorial tablet was then dedicated by Mrs. Charles K. Todd and Mrs. James C. Mayor, and accepted for the city of LaHarpe by Mayor H. E. Puckett. Music was furnished by the LaHarpe band.

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A movement is now on foot in Quincy to mark the site of the debate between Lincoln and Douglas on October 13, 1858, and if possible the residence occupied by Douglas while he lived in Quincy and the home of Orville H. Browning. Many visitors to Quincy inquire about the location of these places, and a widespread feeling exists that they should be adequately marked. Contributions for this purpose are now being sought. Anyone wishing to make a donation should send it to Mr. C. A. Schnack, Cashier, Mercantile Trust and Savings Bank. Checks should be made payable to the Lincoln-Douglas Memorial Fund.

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On June 12 the three states of Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois joined in celebrating the 129th anniversary of the marriage of Nancy Hanks and Thomas Lincoln at the Lincoln Homestead Memorial Park near Springfield, Kentucky.

The program opened in the morning with flag-raising exercises and the re-enactment of the wedding, which took place on June 12, 1806. In the afternoon Gov. Ruby



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Laffoon of Kentucky, Curtis G. Shake, who represented Gov. Paul V. McNutt of Indiana, and Paul M. Angle, representing Gov. Henry Horner, spoke briefly of Lincoln's life in their respective states. Former Gov. Edwin P. Morrow of Kentucky then delivered the oration of the occasion. After Governor Morrow's address a monument was unveiled by three young women designated by the governors of the three participating states: Miss Clarice Nichols, Danville, Ky.; Miss Alice A. Baylor, Speed, Ind.; and Miss Mary Ann Martin, Salem, Ill.

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Several thousand residents of Missouri and Illinois attended the dedication exercises on May 19 at Pere Marquette Park, the newest and largest recreation center of the State of Illinois. Alexander Wilson, state administrative assistant, delivered the principal address in place of Governor Horner, who had expected to be present. Other speakers included Rep. Hugh Cross and Joseph M. Page, veteran Jerseyville editor who celebrated his ninetieth birthday on the day of the dedication.

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In Sterling, on Tuesday, May 20, a sun-dial was erected and dedicated to the memory of Alfred Bayliss, a former principal of one of the Sterling schools and state superintendent of public instruction from 1899 to 1907. F. J. Bowman, president of the Second Ward school alumni association, presented the memorial to the Board of Education, on whose behalf it was accepted by E. A. Turnroth.



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# **Otto Leopold Schmidt**

**1863—1935**

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Died, at his home in Chicago, on August 20, 1935, Otto Leopold Schmidt, President of the Illinois State Historical Society.

President, German-American Historical Society of Illinois, 1910-1935.

President, Illinois State Historical Society, 1914-1935.

Chairman, Illinois Centennial Commission, 1915-1919.

President, Board of Trustees, Illinois State Historical Library, 1923-1935.

President, Chicago Historical Society, 1923-1927.

President, Mississippi Valley Historical Association, 1926-1927.

His services to history and historical study were valuable beyond computation.







## THE FOXES' FORT — 1730

By  
STANLEY FAYE

Starved Rock towers above the Illinois River, recalling the ambition of La Salle, the work of La Salle's lieutenant Tonti, the boyhood of Tonti's cousin Deliette. Nearly five miles toward the south, beyond oak forest and cultivated fields, grassland thrusts itself on southward between two ravines. From the southern edge of that promontory open woodland drops down to the stream that Illinois Indians called Aramoni, or Vermilion.

Hereabouts Henri de Tonti, alone, fought a battle of wits with a horde of Iroquois raiders. Hereabouts the Shawnee allies built a fort that should guard the Rock and the ambition of La Salle. Here a gully and one of many mounds recall today how a French governor of Canada once stumbled through embarrassment in pursuit of his own ambition.

From the Rock into Canada La Salle's canoes in the springtime carried beaverskins. Nineteen English miles eastward between bluffs and sandstone cliffs of the Illinois, boatmen would urge canoes to the head of the rapids. Beyond another thirteen miles of muddy banks and slopes of forest and of meadow the creek still called Nettle or the river called likewise Mazon invited them to a camping place. Nine miles of next morning's voyage through a smiling valley brought them up to the Kankakee forks of the river. So cargoes of peltry bound to Montreal might pass between those latter twenty-two miles of hillside enclosing the land of Mazon, the land of the riverside nettle and dogbane that yielded *massane*, which is Canada hemp.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Pierre Margry, *Découvertes et Etablissements des Français* (Paris, 1876-86; 6 v.), II, 174; Illinois Historical Collections, XXIII, 306; General Hull's map in A. T. Andreas, *History of Chicago* (Chicago, 1884; 3 v.), I, 53; Major Long's map, *Country drained by the Mississippi, eastern section*, in volume of plates in Edwin James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains* (Philadelphia, 1823).



## THE FOXES' FORT

The sieur de La Salle had accredited to Mazon "the most beautiful landscape in the world." Those wooded meadows, as well as the entire Grand Prairie of which they formed a northern cove, he wished to hold within his seigniorship of Illinois. But King Louis XIV decreed in the year 1684 that La Salle's country of the Illinois people should mount the river northward and eastward only to include Fort St. Louis atop the Rock.<sup>2</sup>

In Tonti's time the Illinois people went with their French officers to live in the Mississippi's bottomland below their river's mouth. Only the Peoria tribes refused to go. Outlawed by Quebec and by Louisiana, the Peoria kept to their own river, at Tonti's newer Fort St. Louis near the Narrows of Peoria Lake to be known as the Illinois of the Narrows, at La Salle's old Fort St. Louis to be known as the Illinois of the Rock. By service lent at Detroit in 1712 against another outlaw tribe, the Foxes, the Illinois of the Rock won back Canadian favor. Tonti's cousin Deliette, no longer now a boy, came to govern the Peoria again for Canada.<sup>3</sup>

The Rock and its prairies were of Canada until 1717. Then King Louis XV detached the country of the Illinois from his upper colony and gave it with its Indians and fur trade to his lower colony. Deliette soon transferred his Illinois headquarters to Fort Chartres in the Mississippi bottom. The Rock in the wilderness marked a boundary point between Canada and Louisiana, between the country of the Peoria on the south and, on the northwest, the prairies of outlaw Kickapoo and Mascoutens.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Harlan H. Barrows, *Geography of the Middle Illinois Valley* (Illinois State Geological Survey, Bulletin 15; Urbana, 1910), page 69; Charles O. Paullin, *Atlas of the Historical Geography of the United States* (Washington, 1932), plate 3-A; Margry, II, 383.

<sup>3</sup>Illinois State Historical Society, *Transactions for 1901*, pp. 41-51; *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, XXXIII (550, 560-61); William Ingraham Kip, *The Early Jesuit Missions* (Albany, 1873), 215-16.

<sup>4</sup>Clarence Walworth Alvord, *The Illinois Country, 1673-1818* (Springfield, 1920), 157-58.



Now arose boundary disputes. Canada claimed southward along both sides of the Mississippi including the Kickapoo prairies to the River Des Moines. In the forests along the Wabash she claimed the fur trade of Miami tribes to the Ohio. Like an enemy salient the Grand Prairie and the river of Illinois Peoria cut apart the eastern from the western hunting grounds of tribes that Canada desired.<sup>5</sup>

The upper colony made good her claim on the east. From within a stockade in the forest of the St. Joseph River (Niles, Mich.) successive district commanders governed the Miami country. Profits of their commerce flowed through their sub-post at Fort Miami (Ft. Wayne, Ind.) and another one where a cove of Grand Prairie opened almost into the Wabash among the Wea tribe of the Miami people (La Fayette, Ind.).<sup>6</sup>

Louisiana raised protest against Canadian title to the Wabash. Protest flourished without effect. Then Louisiana lured away from Canadian service the young officer who commanded for Fort St. Joseph at the Wea post. With a Louisianan lieutenancy and extra pay in addition, Second-Ensign de Vincennes removed himself down river below the *terre-haute* to command the new Post Vincennes, which Louisiana set up among the Miami Piankeshaw tribe. Despite protest now from Quebec he gave the Wabash fur trade to the India Company, monopolist of commerce in Louisiana. Thus in the season of 1726-27 the salient of the south spread wide.<sup>7</sup>

Canada had been trying meanwhile to reduce that salient by luring away the Peoria to Canadian forests, to Canadian

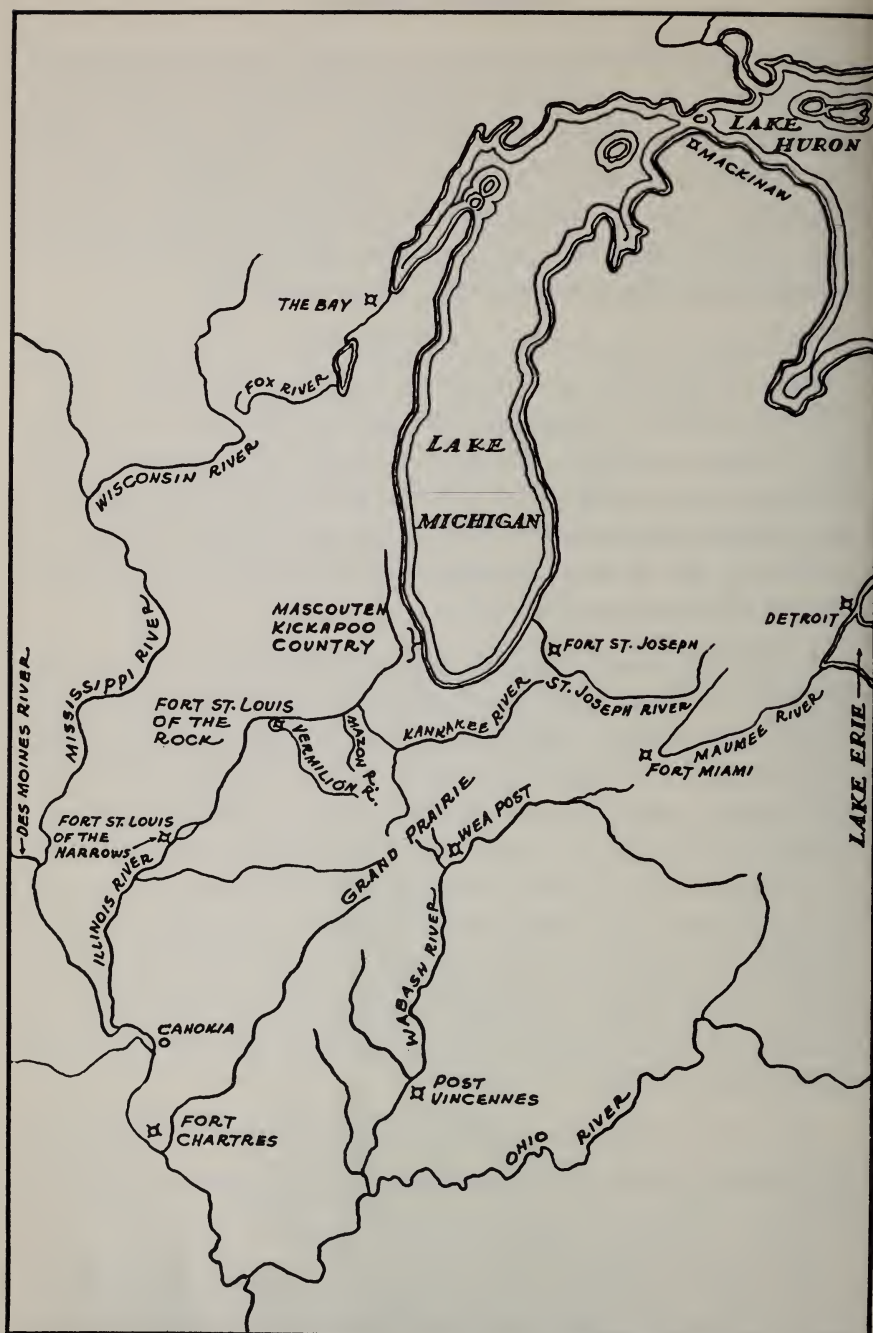
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<sup>5</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVI, 394, 443.

<sup>6</sup>*Cf. Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 71, garrison of "Captain de Vivier." This is Lieutenant de Villiers; Captain du Vivier had died in 1714.

<sup>7</sup>J. P. Dunn, Jr., *Indiana* (Boston and New York, 1888), 47-54; *Canadian Archive Reports for 1904*, appendix K, p. 11; *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVI, 394, 443, XVII, 29, 133.





FRENCH POSTS IN THE ILLINOIS COUNTRY AND NEIGHBORING TERRITORY, 1730.



fur trade, and to Canadian service against the outlaw nation who gave a name to the Fox River of Wisconsin. Like the Iroquois in earlier days those Foxes were enemies of Frenchmen and red men alike. With their southwestern allies, the Kickapoo and Mascoutens, they raided and murdered both in Canada and in Illinois. The veteran Canadian woodsman Robert Grosson de St. Ange, traveling from Fort St. Joseph to New Orleans in 1721, learned that Foxes had destroyed old Fort St. Louis atop the Rock and that Peoria in repayment had burned prisoners alive there. Next year the Foxes drove the Peoria from Fort St. Louis of the Narrows.<sup>8</sup>

Many Illinois of the Narrows went into exile among Illinois cousins, the Cahokia, on the Mississippi (East St. Louis, Ill.). Others joined with the Illinois of the Rock to form a winter's town on their own river well below Peoria Lake.<sup>9</sup> Canada invited the Peoria to hunting grounds less insecure from attack by outlaws. Louisiana protested against this attempted theft of her militiamen and hunters.

The Canadian invitation came from the forest of Green Bay. Like the commandant of Fort St. Joseph in the Miami country, the commandant of the Bay had bought a trade concession among the Foxes' Indian neighbors in Wisconsin.<sup>10</sup> To bring even the timid Peoria within his district would have strengthened the officer's military position. To bring their fur trade to his traders would have put money into his pocket.

Cause existed for complaint against other acts of Canadians. In competition with Louisiana's Fort Chartres were the Bay and Fort St. Joseph. Forbidden brandy went on sale there. Canadian bushrangers sold ammunition for the

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<sup>8</sup>Milo Milton Quaife, *Chicago and the Old Northwest* (Chicago, 1913), 63-64; *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVI, 454.

<sup>9</sup>Apparently at or near Beardstown. Cf. Alvord, 161; *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 48-49, 52, 54; Smithsonian Institution, *Annual Report for 1881*, pp. 568-79.

<sup>10</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVI, 468.



## THE FOXES' FORT

muskets of unfriendly tribesmen. Conditions at Fort St. Joseph may have been bettered in 1725 after the arrival of a new commandant, Lieutenant Nicolas-Antoine Coulon de Villiers. Traders of Canada at the Bay, eager for peltries, continued to spread slander among Wisconsin tribes against the French of Fort Chartres.<sup>11</sup>

Conditions everywhere in Canada were bettered in 1726 by the coming of a new Governor to Quebec, the Marquis de Beauharnois. With him came a new Intendant to direct the royal monopoly of Canadian fur trade. Soon a new officer commanded at the Bay. Two reconciled colonies joined forces in 1728 against Fox warriors, but their expedition caused only a renewal of intercolonial jealousy. The Foxes lived on, undisciplined.<sup>12</sup>

Discipline came by chance in the following year. The Kickapoo and Mascoutens, whose hundred and fifty warriors on the Mississippi were unwilling allies of the Foxes, made peace in the spring with the commandant Deliette at Fort Chartres. At the winter's town they made peace with the Peoria of the Rock in order that three nations might "take measures together to avenge themselves on this common enemy."<sup>13</sup>

Later in the year they made peace with the Governor of Quebec. The Governor invited them to alliance with the forest tribes of his Fort St. Joseph. He gave them Mazon as a hunting ground to guard against an enemy. There and west of the Chicago portage, beyond the river that had been the Mascoutens' own in the days of La Salle,<sup>14</sup> they lit their

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<sup>11</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVI, 449; *Bulletin de Recherches Historiques* (Levis, Quebec, 1906), XII, 167; Alvord, 161-62.

<sup>12</sup>Alvord, 163; Quaife, 65; *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 109.

<sup>13</sup>E. B. O'Callaghan, *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York* (Albany, 1853-58; 10 v.), IX, 889, X, 1055; *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 54-55, 62; *Jesuit Relations* (Cleveland, 1900; 73 v.), LXVIII, 209.

<sup>14</sup>Margry, II, 174, 187; Minet's map and Franquelin's maps (Karpinski Collection in Ayer Collection, Newberry Library).



fires again within the district that Lieutenant de Villiers commanded.<sup>15</sup>

Like the commandant of the Bay, the commandant of the St. Joseph had bought the trade concession of his district.<sup>16</sup> One year after Lieutenant de Villiers' coming to the west, Fort Chartres had robbed him of his Wea and the profits of the Wabash. Now Quebec made good his loss by giving him the Kickapoo and Mascoutens and by giving him also, after a fashion, a tribe from Illinois.

How might a tribe of the Illinois people lend even part allegiance to Canada? Deliette on the distant Mississippi could have answered that question. For occupation of the lower Wabash his commercial rival on the St. Joseph had paid Louisiana back by occupying the upper Illinois. By means of a trick that kept Louisiana from official complaint, Canada had reduced the southern salient.

But the veteran Deliette would answer no question. Deliette was dead.

The elders of the Illinois tribes had been in their boyhood the boyhood comrades of Henri de Tonti's cousin. Deliette was the one French officer to whom since the death of Tonti the Peoria had deferred. In the Kickapoo treaty he did his last service to the Illinois. With Deliette in mid-summer of 1729 died the influence that had held the Peoria of the river in duty to Louisiana. The Illinois of the Rock welcomed a Canadian offer of alliance and of annexation.

When it seemed later to be to his own advantage Governor de Beauharnois confessed that he had performed such an act of annexation in 1731. Still later, under pressure, he confessed that the act had been of 1730. Events of that last mentioned year and their resultant reports make it plain that the first step in the act was taken as early as 1729. The pres-

<sup>15</sup>*Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, XXXIV, 74; *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 101, 149, 222, 322.

<sup>16</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVI, 468, XVII, 131-32.



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ence of an Illinois tribe already in duty to Canada at the Rock did bring about in 1730 a conspiracy of Canadian officers led by the Governor himself. Official reports to be sent to France were tortured into ambiguity. Two honest reports appear to have been suppressed.

The transmitted reports and the situation in which they were made reveal that the Illinois of the Rock from their winter's town sent a petition to Canada in 1729. Canada accepted, provisionally, the allegiance of fifty Peoria warriors and their families and included them in the district of Fort St. Joseph. To prevent official complaint from the south they were settled at their own old home, the Rock, adjoining Mazon and Grand Prairie but within the wilderness of Louisiana.

Canada lacked authority for detaching a tribe and its hunting grounds and peltries from subjection to Louisiana and to the India Company. The King only recently had desired Governor de Beauharnois to take no steps in regard to any savage people without royal consent. However, besides repairing an injury to Canadian commerce and to Fort St. Joseph's income, the presence of Peoria warriors at the Rock gave military advantage to both colonies against the Foxes.

Deserted by their allies, unwilling to surrender to the French, the Foxes had revived a thirty-year-old plan of passing eastward to alliance with the Iroquois. Their route around the foot of Lake Michigan would carry them through the home lands of Kickapoo, Mascoutens, and Fort St. Joseph's Potawatomi, or through Mazon, or through the country of the Rock, and onward through the district of Fort St. Joseph, across Grand Prairie, past St. Joseph's ungarrisoned Wea post, across the Wabash, and to safety in the forest. Lieutenant de Villiers, commanding officially all that district except the Rock, had orders from Quebec<sup>17</sup> to

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<sup>17</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 143.



be on the alert and to hold his savages ready for an expedition.

Comparison of Canadian reports reconstructs the strategy that a Canadian Governor and his officers made ready against the Fox nation for the summer of 1730. The migrants on their eastward journey could ford the shallow River Checagou (modern Desplaines), but they could ford the deeper Illinois only at or above the Rock. The Potawatomi, Kickapoo, and Mascoutens, without offering to attack, would bar the Canadian fords as far down river as Mazon.<sup>18</sup>

To the Rock, just within the Illinois country, migration would turn its route. Peoria at the Rock would call Illinois kinsmen from the Mississippi to repel invasion of Illinois lands. The Louisianan commandant whom those of the Rock had abandoned would not undertake so long a journey.

One day's march beyond the ruined old Fort St. Louis would lead Fox fugitives to brooks that flow to the River Mazon. Thereabouts the Illinois of the Rock and the allies of the Hemp would hold them fast. The commandant of Fort St. Joseph would bring or send down his Miami warriors. The influence of those latter would balance such influence as the Foxes might hold among the Miami Wea of the Wabash. Unofficial reinforcement from the Mississippi would assure Canadian victory within limits that Canadians could claim as their own.

To gain assurance in advance the early presence of a Canadian Peoria tribe was needed at the Rock. How well the Peoria understood this is shown by the words with which later they called upon Governor de Beauharnois to treat them not as Louisianans or as conditional allies, but "as his other children."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>John F. Steward, *Lost Maramech and Earliest Chicago* (Chicago, 1903), 373: ". . . les parrages du côté du nord-est." The plural *parrages* meant in eighteenth century French, like *paraaje* in Spanish, a distant, indefinite site, place, district, region.

<sup>19</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 169-70.



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The Fox nation began the campaign of 1730 by quitting the Fox River of Wisconsin about the first of June. So by only a few days they escaped battle with an expedition made up, at much cost to the government and without authority from the Governor, by Canadian officers on the straits of Mackinac. Early in July the report of failure in Wisconsin came to Quebec.<sup>20</sup>

Further expense should be avoided, in view of the strategy prepared. So Governor de Beauharnois sent out what he represented as a circular letter to officers in command of posts.

That circular directed itself pointedly only to Fort St. Joseph, where lived the tribe of Sauk. It forbade commandants and garrisons to go on such expeditions without orders from Quebec. It forbade the delivery of muskets and ammunition in any trade with the Foxes or with their former friends, among whom the Sauk won special mention. It forbade any treaty with the Foxes. It urged commandants to incite loyal Indians to expeditions against that enemy, and it ordered powder and shot to be issued free of charge for such a purpose.<sup>21</sup>

The order reached Fort St. Joseph well after August 10. It reached Fort Miami before August 20. Its earlier passage through Detroit is evident in a letter written there under date of August 22. On that date news had reached Detroit that such an expedition as the Governor had just forbidden had been planned to start out twelve days earlier from the St. Joseph River.<sup>22</sup>

Whatever the commandant of Detroit may have said orally by messenger, in his report transmitting this news he wrote only what the Governor might, without embarrass-

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<sup>20</sup>Steward, 362-63, 366-67.

<sup>21</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 102, 143.

<sup>22</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 100-02.



ment, forward from Quebec to the French ministry in Versailles across the ocean. Between the lines he told Quebec, and not Versailles, that the news had come to him from a spot on the Illinois River inconvenient to locate by words, west of Mazon and not west of the Rock.

The commandant of Detroit once had commanded at Fort St. Joseph.<sup>23</sup> The Illinois of the Rock had been his neighbors. He knew the prairie country.

The officer could not fail to see that Canadian strategy against the Foxes had failed. Yet for the eye of Versailles he made it seem by equivocation that the Foxes had been halted and held fast, by Canadian Indians, between the Illinois and Wabash Rivers, within the territory of Canada. His report set a precedent of deceit that his fellow officers and even the Governor accepted and followed.

Armed with bows and arrows, armed too with a few French muskets, that Governor's enemies had come down through the knee-high prairie grass of spring. Trails around the foot of Lake Michigan the Foxes found barred to them by Potawatomi, Kickapoo, and Mascoutens. Canadian allies sent news of an enemy's arrival to the Peoria of the Mississippi and to Fort St. Joseph, whence it may be believed the news went on post haste to Detroit and to the Governor in Quebec. Provisions of that Governor's strategy brought the Foxes early in July to the Illinois River not far from the Rock.

With warriors three hundred and fifty in number, with old men, women and children to raise the number nearly to a thousand, again the Foxes invaded the Peoria country. Instead of pushing their march across Grand Prairie they pitched camp. Fox messengers took the long trail to the "British" Seneca Iroquois asking reinforcement in order

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<sup>23</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVI, 398.



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that a homeless tribe might go on to join the Iroquois confederacy.<sup>24</sup>

Kickapoo, Mascoutens, and Potawatomi sat waiting in Mazon. At the Rock the Peoria carried out the Canadian plan made against the Foxes.

Deserters as they were, this tribe of the Illinois did not appeal to Fort Chartres. About the middle of July their messengers came again to the Peoria of the Mississippi telling that Foxes had seized women and children of their village and murdered the son of their great-chief. With more difficulty than he cared to confess a commandant at Fort Chartres held his savages and his French traders and farmers from an expedition on their own account.

If an unofficial expedition had started from the Mississippi at that time it would have acted its part intended by Canadian strategy. Toward the end of the month the Fox nation took up impatiently their march from the Rock toward the River Mazon's headquarters and the ungarrisoned Canadian post of the Wea beyond on the Wabash.

Now timid Peoria sharpshooters escorted their enemy across the Louisianan meadows of the Rock and across those farther meadows of Grand Prairie that might be equally of Louisiana and of Canada. Peoria messengers sped to Mazon. Two hundred and fifty warriors set out from Mazon to answer the call. One hundred of the new allies turned back. One hundred and fifty went on, traveling slowly in order not to meet the enemy too near the Rock. Morning on Grand Prairie showed them battle between skirmishing Peoria and the Foxes encumbered by the presence of women and children. Canadian strategy seemed to be succeeding.

Men of Mazon ran up through summer grass waist-high

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<sup>24</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 102, 110, 118-19.



to join the attack against the Foxes. The Illinois warriors chose this moment for taking to their heels. Abandoned by half his total force, the war-chief of the Potawatomi could do no more than continue the skirmish. The Foxes dared not venture on east-southeastward toward the Wea post. The allies lacked strength to hold them where they were. Back into the Illinois country of the Rock, back into Louisiana, the Foxes retreated. Canadian strategy had failed.

As the Foxes retreated they were heard to cry out (or so it was written for the eye of Versailles) that a party of mounted scouts had been reported not far away. The war-chief of the Potawatomi could name no one who this might be save Monsieur de Vincennes with his men and his Spanish horses from the Piankeshaw post of Fort Chartres. Neither the Potawatomi nor the Governor in Quebec could fail to understand why an officer on scout duty for Louisiana should not aid in halting the northwestward retreat.

Back went the Foxes more than a half-day's march, following it may be the northwestward course of the Vermilion River. Night brought them to the point, four and three-quarter English miles directly south and across forest and meadow from the Rock, where woodland descends between ravines to the northern bank of the Vermilion in its westward course. There they stopped.

Along a five-hundred foot front on the high, steep bank of shale and up the rocky slope to the crest, sixty feet above, they made themselves strong. At the east, one ravine gave them an escarp with a counterscarp beyond musket shot. A double palisade, stake leaning against stake, soon topped the gullied escarp of the river bank. At the southwest an artificial mound and a gully still tell how firmly the Foxes held that angle of their fort. Fascined embankments with protecting ditches are said to have climbed the slope northward



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from river bank to crest and to have crossed from ravine to ravine on the summit level where now the land is tilled.<sup>25</sup>

The Illinois of the Rock sent messengers for the third time to their kinsmen near Fort Chartres. Across sixty leagues of prairie the Foxes sent messengers to the Wea asking for aid or for neutrality. The Potawatomi war-chief went on a mission of his own to that same tribe of the Wabash. To Fort St. Joseph two Mascouten warriors hastened along the shortest trail, which led sixty leagues straight<sup>26</sup> eastward through Mazon. So on August 16 Lieutenant de Villiers of the St. Joseph learned news that, after two days of hesitation, he forwarded to his Fort Miami and to Detroit.<sup>27</sup>

Two days he hesitated. Canadian strategy had failed. The Foxes had turned back to Louisiana. Should he go to the Rock? Should he dare go beyond his own frontier?

The King had promised favor to the Canadian officer who should destroy the Foxes.<sup>28</sup> Yet, if Lieutenant de Villiers would destroy the Foxes before the Seneca might come, he must destroy them, now, at the Rock. In that case could he claim a Canadian victory? Could he claim it and yet not reveal to Versailles that Quebec had annexed men and territory and even fur trade without royal permission? Failure, as in the recent expedition of the Straits, would in any

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<sup>25</sup>Cf. maps of Chaussegros de Lery in Archives Nationales, Paris, C<sup>11</sup>, A 126 (Karpinski Collection, photostats, in Ayer Collection, Newberry Library, Chicago; tracings in Illinois State Historical Society, *Transactions for 1908*, p. 254), *Plan du Fort des Sauvages Renards* and *Blocus du Fort*, Nov. 15, 1730. The site includes the "rathole" coal mine of B. F. Studebaker. Site and mine may be reached through the Charles Ott farm on the Ottawa road nearly one mile east northeast of the Lowell bridge, Illinois route 178, by lane shown on U. S. Geological Survey map of Illinois, La Salle quadrangle. For the site of the fort and the Canadian camp, see Ottawa quadrangle; of the Louisianan camp, Streator quadrangle. The site may be viewed from a public road mounting southward from the farther river bank one mile east of the hamlet of Lowell.

<sup>26</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 100: ". . . in haste . . . only two days."

<sup>27</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 100-02, 114.

<sup>28</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVI, 440, XVII, 21.



case discredit him. Failure might cause his ruin. So too, at the Rock, might success.

Lieutenant de Villiers was forty-eight years old. He was the father of a large family. No longer did he hold the political influence that had made him an ensign at the age of eighteen. During the sixteen years of his lieutenancy he had waited for the second promotion that chance now might grant to him at last or deny forever.<sup>29</sup> His fur trade also was involved. Two days he hesitated. Then interest won its struggle against prudence, and he made his decision. Two days still later, on August 10, he set out on his journey "to the rock."

With him and his garrison, traders, and warriors, went his two eldest sons, his twenty-two-year-old namesake the first-ensign of Fort St. Joseph,<sup>30</sup> and Louis, a cadet, on that day just twenty years of age.<sup>31</sup> Whether a seventeen-year-old son, François, made one of the party is not recorded. From his first camp the lieutenant wrote to Quebec a letter that, forwarded from Detroit, may have given the Governor full knowledge of events. Then he traveled onward over such a route as that by which news of battle had been brought to him.

Mascouten runners bearing that news to Fort St. Joseph had left the Vermilion River about August 3.<sup>32</sup> At the same time Peoria messengers had started south on a journey that brought news perhaps even within four days and nights to Fort Chartres (Prairie du Rocher, Ill.).

Here in the bottomland of the Mississippi River stood the capital of Louisiana's Illinois country. Here through

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<sup>29</sup>*Bulletin de Recherches Historiques*, XII, 163-64, 174-75; *Canadian Archives Reports for 1899*, supplement, 120.

<sup>30</sup>*Bulletin de Recherches Historiques*, XII, 174; *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 71, 117.

<sup>31</sup>*Bulletin de Recherches Historiques*, XII, 171-72.

<sup>32</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 100; estimates of cross-country racers in *Chicago Tribune*, Aug. 6, 1932, p. 15, c. 6.



the death of Deliette and another superior officer the governorship of Illinois and command of the fort had devolved by seniority on the elderly, illiterate, half-pay lieutenant Robert Grosson, by courtesy called sieur de St. Ange, who had passed much of his life in Canada—it is said, as an enlisted man.

So great were expenses in the southern colony, so small the yield of the fur trade, that the King in 1724 had reduced by half the European army of Louisiana. Only half-pay commissions in companies earlier disbanded could be offered in New Orleans to St. Ange and his elder son when they transferred themselves to Louisianan service in 1722. More recently the Governor in New Orleans had kept up a garrison of sixty soldiers for Illinois despite an order from France limiting the force to two officers and six men.<sup>33</sup>

Lieutenant St. Ange for his own sake must further his Governor's policy<sup>34</sup> of increasing again the European army. Otherwise Fort Chartres would be left dependent for military support on the unwarlike Illinois. And half the Peoria of the river, and half those Peorias' fur trade, had just been stolen by Lieutenant de Villiers.

Peoria in exile among the Cahokia tribe near Fort Chartres were eager to see their old hunting grounds freed from the threat of the Foxes.<sup>35</sup> In the first days of August news came to the Mississippi drawing the commander of Illinois into sympathy with his savages. Peoria messengers, and another dispatched perhaps by Lieutenant de Vincennes, reported the Foxes surrounded at the Rock. Canadian strategy had failed. Canadians could have no choice but to reinforce their own savage allies, as well as an expedition from down river, within the territory of Louisiana.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Charles Gayarre, *Louisiana, Its Colonial History and Romance* (New York, 1851), 370, 400; Alvord, 159-60.

<sup>34</sup>Stewart, 368-69.

<sup>35</sup>Alvord, 172.

<sup>36</sup>*Cf. Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 101, 110.



Illinois warriors set out to gather four hundred strong near the winter's town below Peoria Lake. With one hundred Frenchmen, farmers, traders, and soldiers, including at least one of his sons,<sup>37</sup> Lieutenant St. Ange followed them. Paddling, it seems, in dug-outs up the rivers in order that a tale of swift travel by white men might uphold the military theory of Louisiana, Lieutenant St. Ange reached the rendezvous of his savages. The advance continued by land. On the morning of August 17 the allies of Louisiana joined the Potawatomi, Kickapoo, and Mascoutens of Canada and the Illinois of the Rock in besieging the Foxes' fort.

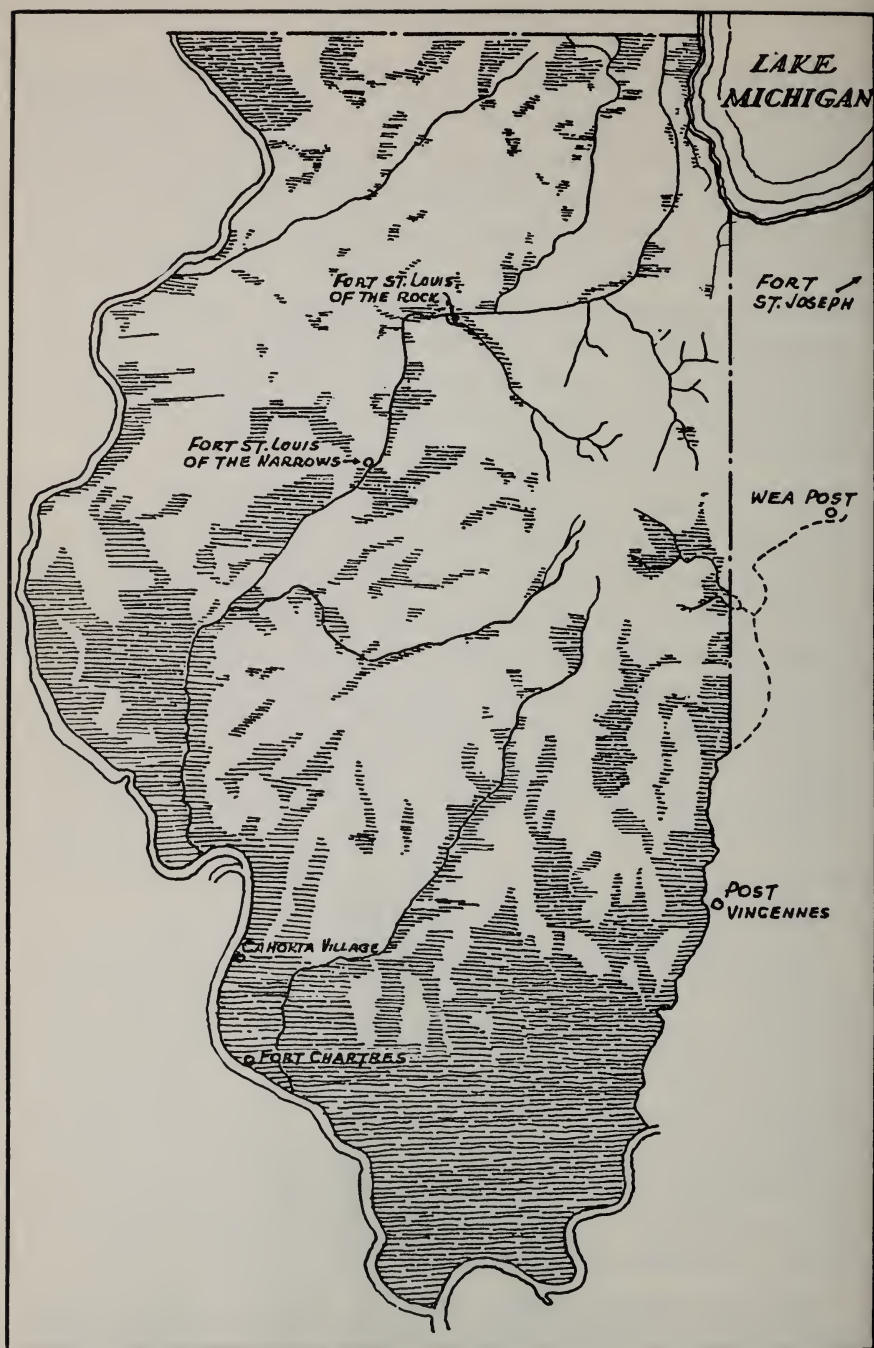
Above the left or southerly bank of the Vermilion, within the territory of Louisiana, Lieutenant St. Ange made his camp on the hillside between the recurving river and a deep ravine at the west. Beyond narrow water he could see the tepees of the Foxes on fortified slopes that climbed from river and eastern ravine among oaks of the valley. He did not say in his later report that an outwork at the west made sharp a spur of high land above the fort's western embankment. That fort, enclosing three acres of hillside, he described as viewed from afar, "a little clump of woods enclosed with stakes and situated on a gentle slope, which rose toward the west and northwest along a little river."<sup>38</sup>

Estimating distance not from the Rock but from the woodland that was the Peorias' line of defence beyond a flat meadow, Lieutenant St. Ange located the Foxes' fort at one league "below" the home of Peoria deserters. The expression that he used, *au dessous*, held various meanings in Canadian French equivalent to *en aval*, down river. On the St. Lawrence and the "lower" great lakes it would mean east or northeast. On Lake Superior, the "upper" lake, and Lake Michigan, it would mean either toward Quebec or

<sup>37</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 130. The two sons in the Illinois country were Pierre, thirty-six years old, and Louis St. Ange de Bellerive, twenty-eight years old.

<sup>38</sup>Steward, 373.





FOREST AND PRAIRIE LANDS IN ILLINOIS, 1730.  
The shaded areas indicate timber.



toward New Orleans. St. Ange, reporting to New Orleans, gave to it the meaning of south.

One league below the forest of the Rock the river valley, the eastern ravine, and the outwork at the west held French sharpshooters beyond effective musket shot of the fort. The Foxes' palisade was too strong for storming, even if Illinois warriors would attack. Yet Lieutenant St. Ange saw one weakness that this fort shared with the Rock itself. No springs flow from that promontory between ravines. The sun of August was shining hot. The Foxes could draw drinking water only from the river, where water and broken rock were quarreling under a little precipice of shale.

The Louisianan commander began to raise a line of breastworks. On the high hillside at the south, receding eighty feet above the stream, he built two field redoubts from which a fusilade if not a sighted shot might block the gullies of the river bank even at night.<sup>39</sup>

So well did the counterworks progress that on the third day the Foxes asked for terms. Terms were refused. Battle by sharpshooters renewed itself. Within the next few days the French party increased its strength with the coming of Canadian auxiliaries under command of Lieutenant de Villiers.

With Lieutenant de Villiers had come from Fort St. Joseph his sons, his little garrison, his Canadian interpreter Pierre Réaume, and his traders, about fifty Frenchmen in all, and three times as many warriors, Potawatomi, Miami, and Sauk. A direct route would have led him after a march of sixty leagues to the neighborhood of the Rock. Such a route, or the longer, easier voyage on the rivers, carried him by way of the Mascouten-Kickapoo camp in Mazon.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>39</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 111, 115; *Blocus du Fort*.

<sup>40</sup>A summer's trail passed from Niles, Mich., to Rolling Prairie, Ind., to Joliet, Ill., and westward along the left bank of the Desplaines-Illinois. The league quoted is the post league of 2,000 toises, or 2.422 English statute miles.



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There the leader added to his party the hundred warriors who two weeks earlier had refused to advance against their old friends. The day of his arrival on the Vermilion with three hundred men in all saw also the arrival of two hundred Wea and Piankeshaw brought across sixty leagues of prairie by the Potawatomi war-chief. Both these Miami tribes, no longer tributary to Lieutenant de Villiers' commerce, joined Lieutenant St. Ange and the Illinois warriors. The Peoria Illinois of the Rock acknowledged the compact of 1729 by camping with the Canadians. The besiegers numbered twelve hundred men.<sup>41</sup>

Even if Lieutenant de Vincennes did not perhaps make part of the Louisianan company, the meeting of the two commanders cannot have been cordial. These were commercial rivals. Neither could forget the allurements of the Wea. Neither could forget the allurements of the Peoria. Neither could ignore that a Canadian political scheme intended not wholly to advantage of Louisiana was acting on that field to disadvantage of Canada.

Lieutenant de Villiers, director of trade at Fort St. Joseph, elegant father of six elegant sons, Canadian ensign at the early age of eighteen, now a lieutenant of full military rank and commander of an entire district,<sup>42</sup> confronted a political enemy.

He saw an illiterate father of all but illiterate sons. He saw a man who, nine years before, had set out from Fort St. Joseph without official distinction to be commissioned a little later, at the age of nearly fifty, in a company that did not exist. He saw a rude Frenchman of the wilderness, possessor of no trade concession, half-pay lieutenant of Louisiana, district and post commander only through ultimate devolution.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 114-15; *Blocus du Fort*.

<sup>42</sup>*Bulletin de Recherches Historiques*, XII, 161 ff.

<sup>43</sup>P-F-X. Charlevoix, *Journal of New France*, letter of Oct. 5, 1721, and letter of Oct. 20, author's note; Illinois State Historical Society, *Transactions for 1909*, pp. 135-46; Alvord, 158, 210.



For the moment the leaders put politics aside. They refused an offer of the Foxes to surrender on condition that all lives should be spared. This refusal won applause among Illinois warriors and threatening censure among those of Canada. Lieutenant de Villiers had come to the Rock with allies most of whom had been allies of the nation that now they were besieging. His imprudence became manifest.

Not only the Sauk but also other tribes of Canada demanded that prospective captives should be enslaved rather than massacred. The Illinois could prophesy with reason that the northern tribes would set free any prisoners taken. Thus willfully would be created again the enemy whose destruction had been made possible. Again a Canadian expedition against the Foxes would work out only in expense to the government. Again the men of Fort Chartres would come back, as in 1728, from an enterprise made vain by "the scant coöperation, the attitude, and the poor leadership" of Canadian officers.

The career of Lieutenant de Villiers depended on firm treatment of this situation. Lieutenant St. Ange told later that the Canadian seemed nevertheless intimidated by his Sauk. Yet, as the officer's report continues, with reference to the Wea as sly as it is ironical, the Canadian party was not the stronger one. The rough-and-ready Louisianan held the situation in control. The siege went forward as it had begun.

Lieutenant de Villiers and his sons chose a campground on the prairie level, northeast of the Foxes' fort. It would have been a nice question, one for lawyers and surveyors to argue, whether that fort stood partly within Canada or quite within the Illinois country as defined in 1684 by the King. The intercolonial boundary, if it had been drawn to the letter of the royal grant, might have passed southward from the Rock to the Vermilion and southeastward along the river



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valley to cross the sixty-league breadth of Grand Prairie. Drawn by the compass, such a line might pass through the Foxes' fort. Drawn by the stars, it would include the fort within Louisiana. Perhaps by mere chance the Canadians pitched their camp two or three hundred yards within a boundary that Canada could claim.

The Canadians at the northeast built encompassing earth-works of their own with two redoubts. They built also two scaffoldings so that bullets from a height might fall in the fort's ditches, out of which Fox warriors were firing French bullets with French powder from French muskets against French soldiers.

As these works went forward distrust of the Sauk was seen to have been well based. The Sauk were giving food and Fort St. Joseph's powder and shot in secret to the Foxes and were helping noncombattants to pass through the French lines to freedom. On September 1 Lieutenant de Villiers turned his own fire upon the point where his own allies were communicating with the enemy.

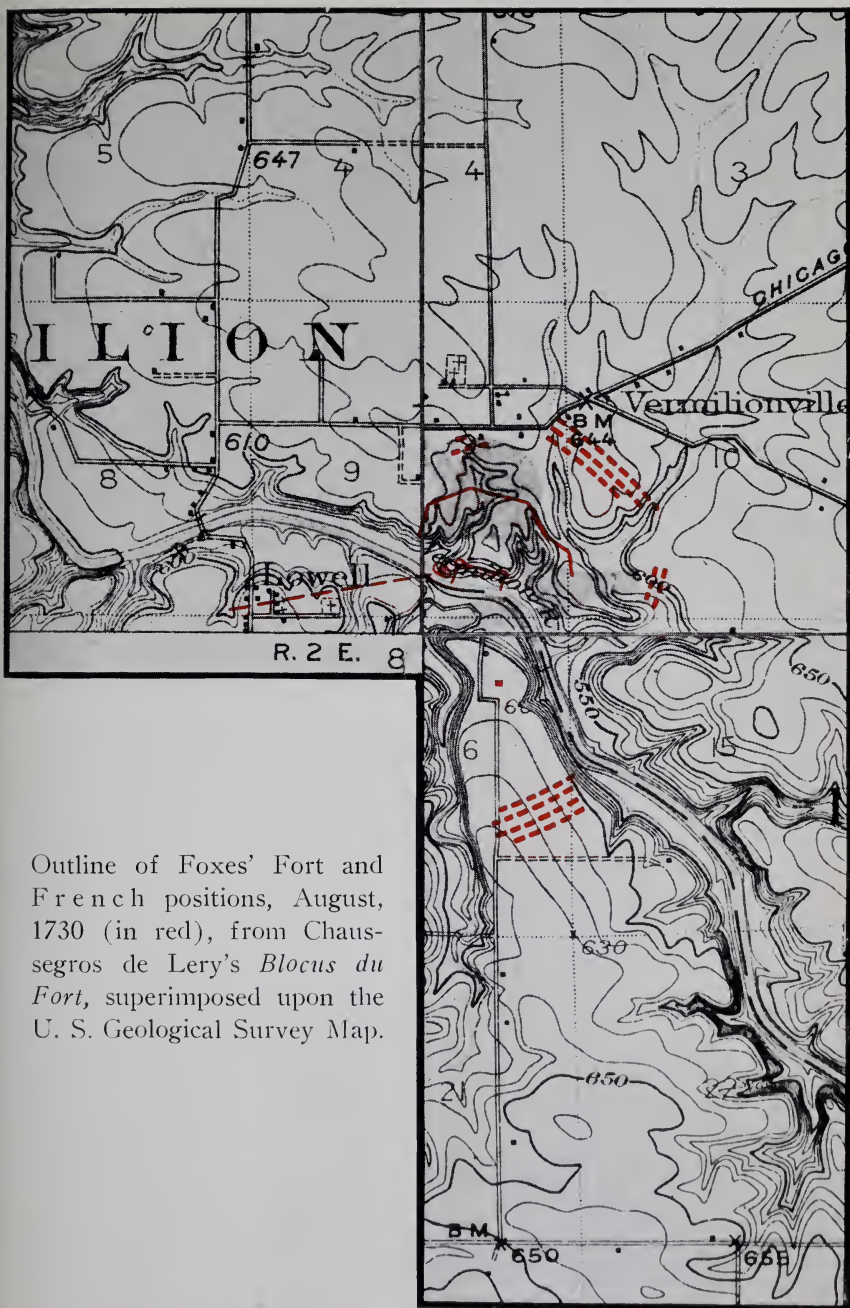
Illinois warriors, unwarlike but quarrelsome, sought to take revenge on the traitors. Disorder to advantage of the besieged arose among the besiegers. Disorder ceased when the Louisianan commander asserted supreme authority. Lieutenant St. Ange put his hundred Frenchmen under arms between his allies and the warriors whom Lieutenant de Villiers had brought from Canada.

On that same day the officer of Fort St. Joseph commanding at Fort Miami appeared with ten Frenchmen and two hundred Indians in response to the message that Lieutenant de Villiers, his superior, had sent him from the St. Joseph. He brought news of a circular letter addressed by the Governor in Quebec to Canadian post commanders in the western country.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 111-12, 115-16.





Outline of Foxes' Fort and French positions, August, 1730 (in red), from Chaussegros de Lery's *Blocus du Fort*, superimposed upon the U. S. Geological Survey Map.







If Lieutenant de Villiers already had thought his position difficult, what may have been his feelings when his second-in-command gave him news from Quebec? At undeniable cost to the government of Canada, Lieutenant de Villiers had led his garrison, his traders, and his savages to the line of his frontier. It was not his fault that Canadian strategy had failed. Yet almost every act he had committed in trying to remedy failure had been forbidden him by a "circular" pointedly composed for his own reading, which nearly had reached his post at the time of his departure for Louisiana.

The Frenchmen of Forts Chartres, St. Joseph, and Miami, with their Indian allies of Canada, Louisiana, the Wabash, and the Rock, held a council. Only destruction of the Foxes could justify the Canadian expedition now. No longer might the Sauk put forward their demands. No longer might other Canadian warriors waver in indecision. Under orders from Quebec all Canadians agreed with all Louisianans to destroy the Fox nation.

The Sauk had offered good argument for compromise with the Foxes. The water supply of the fort had not yet been cut off, and the food supply had failed without, as much as within, the palisade. Game had vanished from the sun-baked prairie. Fourteen hundred besiegers were gnawing the leather of their equipment.

On September 7 two hundred Illinois deserted; at least, so says the record of Louisiana. Lieutenant de Villiers set the number at three hundred.

One hundred Canadian allies absented themselves on the following day. Their commander said that they had gone hunting.

No time remained for further desertion. One hour before sunset of the eighth the first storm of autumn broke violently. Night followed with chill, with fog, with drizzling rain. Cold darkness dripped upon the Foxes' fort. The Canadian



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Indians, whose duty it was to guard the northerly entrenchments, rebelled against duty and kept to their camp at the northeast.

In the night, in the dark, in the cold, in the drizzle, in the fog, out of the unwatched ditch the Foxes stole away. Not toward the northern meadow did they turn then, not up toward Canada. Down they went southwestward, into the depths of the darkness, into the thick of the fog, to ford the river unseen below the camp of St. Ange. Then southward they climbed to the Grand Prairie of Louisiana.

Somewhere the crying of children told distant ears that the Foxes were escaping. Into the Canadian trench a prisoner from an alien tribe came creeping to reveal the craft of the Foxes.

In the night, in the fog, friend could not be told from enemy if a battle should begin. The Foxes groped on through obscurity. Women and children stumbled ahead protected at the rear by the warriors. Avengers from Louisiana followed close, ready to halt them in the dawn.

Through black night a guide showed the Foxes a path. Out into Grand Prairie the recurving Vermilion River led fugitives southeastward along such a way as they must go to gain sanctuary in forests beyond the Wabash. Two dozen English miles they traveled, it was said, through wet grass shoulder high. Canadian warriors, starting in pursuit at dawn, overtook them where the Illinois were delaying their advance. The blood of the Foxes reddened the earth of a meadow almost as much of Canada as it was of Louisiana. Canadian strategy, thanks to Lieutenant St. Ange, at last had succeeded.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>*Blocus du Fort* and *Plan du Fort*. No trace of a battle field appears reported near Streator in the Prairie of the Mascoutens. This name (a pun, Prairie of the Prairie Men) was applied during later decades to Grand Prairie north of the Vermilion River of Vermilion County (Mascoutens' River), but only by the still equivocal Beauharnois to the Piankeshaw hunting grounds south of that Vermilion. The Grand Prairie group of Mascoutens and Kickapoo began removing to the Wabash about 1740. In 1765, and again in 1774, they were reported only at the Wea post. A year or two later they joined the Canadian group of Piankeshaw



Or had Lieutenant de Villiers aided success by failing willfully to drive even his faithful Potawatomi to a night-time journey and an attack at dawn?

It may be that Lieutenant St. Ange had some such suspicion in his mind when, later in the day, he wrote his report. With more thought to politics than to military art he described, as acting Governor of Illinois, the expedition of "M. de St. Ange, commanding officer at Fort Chartres." Illiterate as he was, he told his story either by dictation or in the words of a secretary as Canadian as he; the Norman salt of Canada seasons this French hodge-podge of narration, of ironical complaint, of intercolonial dispute.<sup>46</sup>

Lieutenant St. Ange said nothing of Peoria warriors stolen from him. Canadian occupation of the Rock gave him no basis for official protest. Innuendo and insinuation he chose instead for discussing the imprudence of his rival, whom he named with casual sarcasm as commandant only of the River St. Joseph and not of the Wea, the Piankeshaw, and the Illinois of the Rock. To accompany his text he caused to be sketched a plan of the Foxes' fort.

The report extended itself in supporting the policy of the Governor in New Orleans. In the hands of that dignitary report and sketch served to illustrate a thesis on European colonial armies that went on, next spring, from New Orleans to France. Recounting the defeat of the Foxes "within the territory of Louisiana" the Governor recommended that the commandery of Illinois should be erected into a provincial general headquarters.<sup>47</sup>

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established since a quarter century on the Vermilion near the site of Danville. There and on the Sangamon they lived until the nineteenth century treaties sent them west: Illinois State Historical Society, *Transactions for 1902*, p. 212, *Transactions for 1908*, p. 189, *Journal*, VIII, 35, XX, 63, 66, 69, XXI, 297, 301, *Collections*, X, 2, 3, XI, 33-34; *Indiana Historical Publications*, II, 436, 437, 438; *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 149, 174, 222, 336, 382, 448, XVIII, 12, 92, 111, 366-67; *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, XXXIV, 122, 207-08; Barrows, p. 69; Paullin, plate 29.

<sup>46</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 109-13; French text in Steward, 372-74.

<sup>47</sup>Gayarre, 449; Steward, 368-69; *Canadian Archive Reports for 1905*, v. 1, Archives of the Fortifications of the Colonies, part 3, p. 42. The plan as copied in New Orleans, March 26, 1731, now is missing from, or misplaced in, the archives.



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Such a change in the government of Illinois would bring a younger officer to command at Fort Chartres, but not to disadvantage of St. Ange. St. Ange had grown old. His service of nearly fifty years to colonial France had been crowned by victory over the Foxes despite interference from Canada. In the year 1732 his resignation as commandant was given and accepted.

One year later St. Ange had the satisfaction of surrendering Fort Chartres to his successor. Coming with the new officer he could see two companies of French soldiers and four cannon. Instead of being reduced the military strength of Illinois now rose to one hundred and fifty men, to honor the ex-commandant in his old age.

Nearby his fort St. Ange lived on with his wife and his young daughter Elizabeth. He received in good time the rank of captain. First his elder son and then the younger served in the southern forests of the Wabash that Fort Chartres had taken away from Fort St. Joseph.

Unlike Lieutenant St. Ange, Lieutenant de Villiers put off the making of his report. Returning to camp after the battle of September 9 he too caused sketches to be made of the Foxes' fort and of the counterworks. Then the officers directed that this monument to a Canadian scheme should be destroyed.<sup>48</sup>

Cultivation on the prairie has smoothed away any trace of a northern curtain. Erosion has concealed whatever decaying logs may have left of fascined ridges mounting the rocky slope. The angle at the southwest on the river bank still is marked by an ancient mound and a gully from which, with the aid of the old Canadian maps and their scales, the den of the Foxes may be recognized.

From the Foxes' fort a homeward journey allowed time to

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<sup>48</sup>Cf. use of tenses in the note accompanying the *Plan du Fort*.



Lieutenant de Villiers for thought. His letter of August 10 could be forwarded in copy to France or held in Quebec at the Governor's pleasure. The report about to be made up need not duplicate its contents. On September 23 when the lieutenant in Fort St. Joseph wrote of his expedition he spoke at once of his journey "to the rock." Having done a duty to truth he put down no other word that might aid Versailles in following him on his adventure.

Like the commandant of Detroit one month earlier, Lieutenant de Villiers suggested, equivocally, that the fort as well as the fighting of two battles had been within the territory of Canada. He spoke of the Wea and Piankeshaw as if they were his own allies. Perhaps through oversight he made one similar reference to the Illinois of the Rock.

Acknowledging between the lines receipt of a circular in the field, he confessed the treachery of the Sauk but not that he had given them powder and shot. Unlike Lieutenant St. Ange, he reported as only a few the fifty or sixty Fox warriors who had escaped capture. By implication he denied the existence of those prisoners who not much later were to be freed by his own allies.

Canada's expedition had gone to the border of Louisiana. To Lieutenant St. Ange the commandant of St. Joseph owed escape from failure perhaps more costly than that of the expedition from the Straits. Lieutenant de Villiers took nevertheless for himself all credit for complete and Canadian success.<sup>49</sup>

First-Ensign Nicolas-Antoine Coulon de Villiers and the interpreter Réaume set out to carry the report to Quebec. They arrived too late to include their news among the autumn's documents dispatched to France, but under date of November 2 the Governor and the Intendant signed a joint and jubilant letter to the governmental minister in Ver-

<sup>49</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 113-18.



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sailles. They asked that a captaincy should be given to Lieutenant de Villiers.<sup>50</sup>

Unauthorized annexation of the upper Illinois had been justified. Canadian strategy had worked out to intercolonial benefit. Yet the statesmen of Canada omitted to confess that such strategy had been prepared or such annexation made, if only provisionally.

Ordinarily a Governor of Canada might not have gained help in deceit from an Intendant. The two high offices of colonial government had been created to act in check, one against the other. The Marquis de Beauharnois had little to fear, however, from his current associate.

The person who in 1726 had sailed with Beauharnois to Quebec to direct the fur trade had rebelled against the superior dignity of the Governor. Rebellion had caused his recall.<sup>51</sup> His successor, Gilles de Hocquart, had come from France in 1729 with only a temporary commission. Hocquart's career in Canada hung upon the favor of the Governor. Hocquart dared not censure his patron openly before the time when his full commission as Intendant <sup>52</sup> reached him in 1731. By that time he was too thoroughly entangled to withdraw from a plot that seemed to favor his fur trade.

The acting Intendant did offer a report of operations based on divergent information that he got from Réaume. Significantly the European called attention to remarks transcribed in the dialect of upper Canada.<sup>53</sup> It does not appear whether more than Hocquart's covering letter, as sent later in copy, was permitted by Governor de Beauharnois ever to reach France. The consolidated report that came before the ministry<sup>54</sup> includes nothing except information forwarded by Beauharnois himself.

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<sup>50</sup> *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, V, 107-08.

<sup>51</sup> J. B. A. Ferland, *Cours d'Histoire du Canada* (Quebec, 1861-65; 2 v.), II, 430-34; *Canadian Archives Reports for 1899*, supplement, 130-31, 134.

<sup>52</sup> *Canadian Archives Reports for 1904*, appendix K, 115, 122, 146.

<sup>53</sup> *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 119.

<sup>54</sup> Steward, 379-82.



Thus far the Governor had been able to report equivocally without doing direct violence to truth. Lieutenant de Villiers' letter of August 10 seems to have been thought unsuitable for transmission either in whole or in the extracts that Hocquart promised. The lieutenant's letter of September 23, despite its unhappy mention of the Rock, went forward in copy, though without a capital-R. Yet copying the sketches made on the bank of the Vermilion was seen to be a task of peculiar delicacy.

If words may be strung on a thread that is twisted of ambiguity, equivocation, and truth, a maker of maps can have no such recourse. The civilian (commissioned as captain) who was official engineer and mapmaker of Canada could not afford to act except in good faith. Then too that hot tempered Provençal was a man of spectacular honesty.<sup>55</sup> Therefore, it may be believed, the Governor and the ensign worked together to deceive Gaspard Chaussegros de Lery.<sup>56</sup>

Strange phrasing and punctuation of the map's titles intimate that it might be the Foxes' fort, and not the Wea post, that had stood "fifty leagues" east southeast of the Rock. Truthfully one title says that the fort had stood "between the rivers of the Illinois." Then a reference to the larger river under its almost forgotten Indian name<sup>57</sup> makes identification more difficult. Through an error not shared<sup>58</sup> by the ensign's father in his report the unnamed "little river" is shown as flowing east instead of west. Otherwise the map of the siege, dated in Quebec, November 15, 1730, needs

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<sup>55</sup>*Canadian Archives Reports for 1899*, supplement, 30, note; same, for 1904, appendix K, index.

<sup>56</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 120.

<sup>57</sup>Rivière de Macopin (Macopine, Macoupin, bear root, arrowleaf, or pickerel weed). The name was applied currently to Crooked Creek near Beardstown; had been applied to the Kankakee-Illinois; is applied today to a small stream near the Illinois River's mouth. See Franquelin's maps of 1683, 1684, 1688; Delisle's map of 1718 in Paullin, plate 24; Charlevoix, letter of Oct. 20, 1721.

<sup>58</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 115.



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only comparison with the modern contour map for proof of accuracy.<sup>59</sup>

Inexperience of Ensign de Villiers in deception may be seen in the data offered for the map *Siege of the Fort*. Reports from the field show the besieging forces to have been equally divided. Supporting his father's pretension to leadership the ensign nevertheless divided the total of fourteen hundred soldiers, traders, farmers, and warriors into one detachment of eight hundred for Canada and another of six hundred for Louisiana. To the sieur de St. Ange, whom he named impolitely as Mr. St. Ange, he conceded the Piankeshaw. He failed to mention the Wea, whom Canada still claimed but who had made part of the detachment from the south. He failed to mention the Sauk. Perhaps through an oversight like his father's he listed among the forces of Canada the Illinois of the Rock.

A large-scale plan of the fort accompanies this map. So minute is the drawing of the plan that it records as a curve in the palisade a projection of the river bank too slight to be shown even on the large-scale modern map. Although the strength ascribed to the surrounding embankment is not confirmed by remains now easily visible, the plan presents the fort in the exact dimensions necessary for defence of this site. It is a worthy complement to the Canadian map of the siege, which interprets without exception and almost with a surveyor's accuracy the military values of all heights and contours of land.<sup>60</sup>

In a note written alongside the *Plan of the Fort of the Fox Savages*, Ensign de Villiers detailed the work of builders named only as "they." He imputed to savages a knowledge of military architecture not all of which "they" did possess and which, possessing it, the Foxes could not have

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<sup>59</sup>*Blocus du Fort* (Karpinski Collection) is drawn to about eight degrees of east declension. Tracing in Illinois State Historical Society, *Transactions for 1908*, p. 254, does not show punctuation of the title.

<sup>60</sup>*Plan du Fort; Blocus du Fort*.



put to use in the one month permitted to them. He described the plan and the fascined walls of a typical European field redoubt as if copied from French military handbooks. He included in his plan two European bastions, such as neither the Foxes nor any other Algonquian tribes are known ever to have built without European advice or would have consented to use.

The ensign spoke equivocally of the builders. He did not hint that the Foxes may have seized and repaired the old Shawnee fort, one of the four defences that the Sieur de La Salle, master of the Rock in the year 1683, had directed his own allies to raise against the Iroquois.<sup>61</sup>

These remissions to France were supplemented by the acting Intendant in another letter written in January. Here Hocquart told what the earlier correspondence had omitted—the distance of the battlefield, and therefore by inference of the Foxes' fort, from a known point. The distance that he named was equal to the distance between Fort St. Joseph, near the foot of Lake Michigan, and the Rock. But Hocquart seems to have mistranslated into Parisian French one of the colonial expressions with which Réaume had caught his interest in November.

Instead of writing the ambiguous *au dessous* (below), the well-meaning official wrote *au sud* (to the south) and performed a triumph of self-contradiction. He located the battle of September 9 "in a plain situated between the River Wabash and the River of the Illinois, about sixty leagues to the south of the extremity or foot of Lake Michigan, to the east southeast of the Rock in the Illinois country".<sup>62</sup>

Before these letters, long delayed in transmission, could be considered in France, the ministry considered earlier re-

<sup>61</sup>*Cf.* La Salle in *Illinois Historical Collections*, I, 123; Joutel's MS. map, facsimile in Justin Winsor, *Cartier to Frontenac* (Boston and New York, 1894), 318-19; Franquelin's own *Carte de la Louisiane* (Karpinski Collection).

<sup>62</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 129, with reference to the French transcript. For the *fond du lac* see Margry, II, 82; Charlevoix, letter of August 16, 1721; *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVI, 284.



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ports from Quebec. In part answer to the King's memoir of 1731 the Governor and the Intendant (no longer acting Intendant) protested in the autumn of that year against a reprimand just sent them for the expedition of the Straits. They wished reprimand might be balanced by compliment for the success of Lieutenant de Villiers.

So embarrassing had been the words from Versailles that the Governor first changed the color of truth and then bleached out the last tint of it. Already he had reported the gist of his circular directed to commandants. Now he reported it again, with a favorable difference, and he said, "It was in obedience to these orders that the Sieur de Villiers acted and that we have succeeded in almost totally destroying that nation."<sup>63</sup>

For review by the Council of the Colonies in the spring of 1732, Canadian reports on the late affair of the Foxes were put into a shortened form. One result suggests that the Lousianan report was reviewed at the same time. Although Lieutenant de Villiers had been represented by the Canadians, including Lieutenant de Villiers, as responsible alone for success all but complete, the royal memoir of 1732 complimented Governor de Beauharnois with reserve on "the almost total defeat of the Foxes in the battle fought against that nation by the detachment under command of the Sieur de Villiers and of the Sieur de St. Ange."<sup>64</sup>

The royal memoir that had been prepared for Quebec in the spring of 1731 spoke of one matter that in the summer of that year sent the minds of Governor and Intendant on a journey back over events not openly of record in their reports of 1730. In January, 1731, the India Company had given up its charter. In July the King was to take Louisianan commerce under his own control. What now should be the fate of the Illinois country and of the Illinois tribes?<sup>65</sup>

<sup>63</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 143.

<sup>64</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 154-55.

<sup>65</sup>O'Callaghan, IX, 1025; Alvord, 167.



The Governor and the Intendant replied that the Illinois country ought to become again a part of the northern colony. Not yet in October of 1731 did they feel free to avow aggression against the India Company in 1729 or even in 1730. With an eye toward the future they said only that within the past few months the Governor had admitted "the Illinois," by petition, to full alliance with Canada and to the fur trade of Fort St. Joseph.<sup>66</sup>

They would have done better if they had told the truth. To steal the trade of the upper Illinois River from the India Company in 1729 or 1730 would have been a minor offense. The ministry annotated their letter with an indignant comment. The Governor, it seemed to Versailles, had annexed the Illinois country in 1731, not from the India Company but from His Majesty the King.<sup>67</sup>

His Majesty's memoir of 1732 reserved judgment on the question of Illinois and withheld further reprimand. It may be that Governor de Beauharnois learned rather from a friend at court that the deceit he had practiced in previous years had had an unfortunate outcome. Under some such stimulus and as in the case of his circular he tried in the autumn of 1732 to cure his discomfort. At last he told the truth, or still not quite the truth, according to how his words might be understood. At least he confessed that he had annexed the Peoria tribe and their hunting grounds in the time of the India Company.<sup>68</sup>

By the date when this latest report reached France the question and the Canadian trickery had become of no importance. The King in council had decided that Louisiana should not be dismembered for the sake of Intendant Hocquart's fur trade. Since the Governor of Canada had in-

<sup>66</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 145-46, 169-70.

<sup>67</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 146 and note.

<sup>68</sup>*Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, XXXIV, 99-100 (Detroit Public Library, Burton Historical Collection, *Cadillac Papers*, XI, 1987, ". . . il y a deux ans.")



## THE FOXES' FORT

sisted that he was better fitted than the Governor of Louisiana for military control of the upper Illinois, the King put such responsibility upon him, and at Canada's expense.<sup>69</sup>

Three years of effort brought little advantage to Quebec, but the deception worked by Lieutenant de Villiers succeeded well. A brevet as captain came to him.<sup>70</sup> To him already had come appointment to re-establish the post and the fur trade of the Bay in Wisconsin, abandoned because of Fox enmity. But if the King in council felt convinced that Lieutenant de Villiers had helped bring the Foxes almost to total defeat, the allies of Fort St. Joseph knew otherwise.

Dozens of Fox warriors had escaped capture in the action of September 9. The captives whom Lieutenant de Villiers had not persuaded his allies to destroy had been released. The Fox nation, smaller but no less enemies of the French, had gone back to the north, some of them to the Fox River of Wisconsin. To Wisconsin and to friendship with them had returned the Sauk.

That faithless tribe whom the commandant of St. Joseph had led to the Vermilion in 1730 and certain warriors against whom he had led them threatened together the peace of the new post at the Bay. In a needless engagement of 1733 both Louis and François de Villiers were wounded; both Captain de Villiers and one of his younger sons were killed.<sup>71</sup>

The former acting Governor of Illinois, enjoying his first months of leisure in his home near Fort Chartres, may have nodded a grey head when he learned what the Foxes and Sauk had done. None knew better than he that a post commander had need of more prudence than Lieutenant de Villiers had brought in 1730 to the Foxes' fort.

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<sup>69</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 157.

<sup>70</sup>*Bulletin de Recherches Historiques*, XII, 171-72.

<sup>71</sup>*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, XVII, 188-91, 200-04.



Lieutenant St. Ange had been no friend of the Canadian commandant. Yet Captain St. Ange did not revive a fathers' quarrel against a young man whose body bore the scar of a wound given to him by the Foxes. Now it was Ensign François Coulon de Villiers who came to serve his King in the country of the Illinois.

In the year 1739, as it appears, only a few months before his death in the late spring of 1740, old Robert Grosson de St. Ange made a marriage for his daughter Elizabeth. The husband he gave her was that son of his late rival.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Alvord, 172, note; Illinois State Historical Society, *Transactions for 1909*, p. 141.

## DEMONSTRATION

A. Le Rocher (the Rock) was Starved Rock: Delisle map of 1718 in Paullin, *Atlas of the Historical Geography of the United States* (Washington, 1932), plate 24.

B. The Ouiatanon (Wea) post was on the Wabash river west of La Fayette, Ind.: Indiana Historical Publications, 2:319.

This point is 146 English statute miles, or 60 French post leagues, east southeast of the Rock.

C. Grand Prairie is the almost treeless plain co-extensive with the state of Illinois north of the Ozark ridge and south of the northern ground moraine of Wisconsin glaciation. *Prairie* as used among Canadians meant necessarily *meadowland* bigger than a *prés*. As early as 1730 the French word *prairie* appears not yet to have gained the meaning of *campagne*. In La Salle's estimation adjectives applied to *campagne* were needed for distinguishing Grand Prairie from what in Illinois are small prairies: Margry, *Découvertes et Etablissements* (Paris, 1876-86; 6 v.), 1:463, 2:122.



## THE FOXES' FORT

1. The skirmish of Aug. 2, 1730, was fought in a plain (not a prairie) between le Rocher and the Ouiatanon: Wisconsin Historical Collections, 17:100.

This was within ten hours' journey of the Foxes' fort: W.H.C., 17:114.

2. The battlefield of Sept. 9 was distant from the Foxes' fort by one day's march (*une journée de chemin*), about twenty-five English miles: Chaussegros de Lery, map, Blocus du Fort, Nov. 15, 1730, in Karpinski Collection; W.H.C., 17:113, 117.

3. The battle of Sept. 9 was fought in a plain (not a prairie) "east southeast of le Rocher in the Illinois Country:" W.H.C., 17:129.

4. The Foxes' fort was "*dans la nouvelle France*:" Blocus du Fort.

5. The battle of Sept. 9 was fought "*sur les terres de la Louisianne par les Illinois et les nations des frontières du Canada*:" Governor Perier in Steward, Lost Maramech and Earliest Chicago, 368.

D. That is to say, the region in question was on the boundary of "Canada" and Louisiana. On the Illinois river the boundary was the Rock: Margry, 2:383. On the Wabash the Ouiatanon, or at least the Ouiatanon (Wea) tribe living there, was in dispute between Canada and Louisiana. It is clear that the Foxes' fort was on, or not more than about twenty-five miles distant from, a line extending east southeast from le Rocher to the Ouiatanon, and that the battlefield of Sept. 9 (the "plain") was Grand Prairie.

6. The Foxes' fort was "*scitué entre les Rivières des Illinois, et celle d'ouabache à 50 Lieues à L'Est-sud-Est du Rocher, dans la nouvelle France*:" Blocus du Fort; punctuation as in the MS.

E. If the Foxes' fort was 50 leagues east southeast of le Rocher, it was ten leagues from the Ouiatanon. In any case the two battlefields were nearby.

7. The battle of Sept. 9 was fought in a locality about sixty leagues distant from a point named as "the extremity or foot (*'l'extrémité ou fond'*) of Lake Michigan:" W.H.C., 17:129.

F. The Ouiatanon was 33 leagues distant in a direct



line from the true foot of Lake Michigan (three miles east of Gary, Ind.) and 43 leagues from Fort St. Joseph (Niles, Mich.). No point on the aforesaid east southeast line is distant nearly so much as 60 leagues from the true foot of Lake Michigan.

G. The only point on that line so much as 60 leagues from Fort St. Joseph is the Rock. This distance is exact.

8. The Foxes' fort was on "a little river:" Blocus du Fort; W.H.C., 17:111, 115.

9. Lieutenant St. Ange, coming from Fort Chartres, made his last two days of march through "des pais couverts:" W.H.C., 17:110-11, Steward, 373.

H. The expression *petite rivière* was applied by Frenchmen in Illinois to streams that today would be called little rivers or big creeks, but not to little creeks (brooks).

Within twenty-five miles in any direction from any point west northwest of the Ouiatanon and east southeast of the Rock the only *petites rivières* are the mid-fork of the Vermilion of Vermilion County and its small tributaries, and the Vermilion River of La Salle County.

The drainage basin of the former Vermilion River was covered with forest, not by prairie woodland: Illinois Natural History Survey, *Bulletin*, v. 16, article 1, map 1; Illinois State Geological Survey, *Bulletin*, v. 15, p. 69.

Immediately toward the southwest of that river, on any line-of-march from Fort Chartres, is a part of Grand Prairie (Champaign County) where the plains and also the eskars are and were unforested.

The Vermilion River of La Salle County ran through a *vaste campagne* (big-and-treeless prairieland) and was "bordée tout au long d'une lisière de bois peu large:" La Salle in Margry, 2:122.

A fifty-mile march from the foot of Peoria Lake to the Rock would have been across well-drained land and therefore across prairie-land neither forested nor empty, but wooded: "des pais couverts:" La Salle in Margry, 2L176, 177, 247, 248; Illinois State Geological Survey, *Bulletin*, v. 15, p. 69.

10. It was "au Rocher" that the Foxes "fortified" themselves: Steward, 373.



## THE FOXES' FORT

11. Lieutenant de Villiers, setting out from Fort St. Joseph to take part in the siege of the Foxes' fort, was on his way "to the Rock:" W.H.C., 17:113.

J. One point on the Vermilion river of La Salle County, and points ten hours and one day distant therefrom, conform to Nos. 1 to 5 and 8 to 11, above.

They conform to 6 if 6, meaningless as it stands, is interpreted to read "between the River(s) of the Illinois and a point on the Ouabache 50 (60) leagues east southeast of the Rock." It is demonstrated that the passage quoted in 6 is part of a scheme based on equivocation.

They conform to 7 more nearly than any other points do. They conform perfectly (and no other points conform at all) if "foot of Lake Michigan" is interpreted as meaning the St. Joseph river. This meaning had been given to the phrase in narratives of earlier years and in one narrative of only nine years past: Margry, 2:81-82, 5:34; Charlevoix, Journal, Aug. 16, 1721.

K. No other point conforms to any one of the foregoing numbers without being in conflict with at least one other number.

12. Messengers were sent from the Foxes' fort at the same time to the Ouiatanon and Fort St. Joseph. The resultant expeditions from these two points arrived at the fort on the same day: W.H.C., 17:114, 115.

L. Each point is 60 leagues distant from the Rock.

13. The Foxes' fort was on a little river near the river de Macopin: Blocus du Fort; Plan du Fort.

M. The point mentioned above and below on the Vermilion river is five miles distant (south) from the Illinois river at the Rock. The mouth of the Vermilion (confluence with the Illinois) is five miles west of the Rock.

In the month of August the great leaves of the macopin, or arrowleaf, choke the riverside lagoons, millponds, sluggish creeks, drainage ditches, and prairie bogs of Illinois. The name might be given with justice to almost any stream. Frenchmen in Illinois applied it in the 1720's to Crooked Creek. It is not known ever to have been applied locally by the French to the Illinois River, though its abundant growth there is recorded by La Salle (Margry, 2:173). But



a popular European cartographer had used it as a secondary name for the Kankakee-Illinois in at least the 1718 edition (though not in some earlier editions) of his printed map of "New France." The use of an equivocal name conforms to the equivocal purpose of these present sources: *Blocus du Fort* and *Plan du Fort*.

14. The little river flowed east past the Foxes' fort, according to De Lery's map *Blocus du Fort*, the origin of which was in data supplied by Ensign de Villiers and the Fort St. Joseph interpreter: *Blocus du Fort*; W.H.C., 17:120.

15. The little river flowed west past the Foxes' fort, according to Lieutenant de Villiers' report compared with *Blocus du Fort*: W.H.C., 17:115.

N. This latter must be taken as correct. An error in a map copying a sketch could be attributed to the draughtsman, but a reporting officer could be held responsible for a direct assertion.

It is notable that, accompanying the mass of ambiguity in the documents referred to in the previous pages, not one absolutely false assertion can be demonstrated. The only two arguable exceptions are 14, above, and 7, above (17 below).

O. Comparing *Blocus du Fort*, thus amended, with the U. S. Geological Survey map, only two points appear possible for identification as the site of the Foxes' fort. Examination in the field rules out Deer Park, a suburb of Oglesby, Ill. The other point is on the north (right) bank of the Vermilion, one mile east of the hamlet of Lowell, five miles south of the Rock, near the Vermilionville crossroads on the Lowell-Ottawa road.

P. Examination in the field and comparison with De Lery's *Blocus du Fort* and *Plan du Fort* and with the U. S. Geological Survey map show De Lery's topographical data to conform with almost the exactness of a surveyor's observation to the features of this site.

The salient angle of the circumvallation at the east represents a projection of the hillside beyond the eastern ravine.

De Lery's isolated height at the west represents another projection of the hillside at the west. This projection is not



## THE FOXES' FORT

in fact isolated; but De Lery had no means of showing this one height of land except by contours suggesting a mound.

The otherwise inexplicable curve of the palisade on the river-front represents a projecting lip of the stratum of shale that forms the river-bank.

At the point shown by De Lery as the southwestern angle of the fort is a heap of earth differing from other slight irregularities of the terrain in being isolated from the slope and in being unstratified. Superimposed leafmold testifies to a considerable age. Just west of the mound, where De Lery shows a ditch extending northward, the only gully on this rocky hillside extends in almost the direction shown.

The river-bank is high and steep, as described in the note accompanying the Plan du Fort, though less high than the indicated fifteen feet (sixteen feet, English).

Immediately on the river-bank are little gullies, apparently artificial in origin, in even greater number than shown by De Lery.

The rocky nature of the ground explains the use of fascined embankments instead of a single line of palisade.

The irregularity of the slope, resulting from unequal erosion of shale, coal measures, and limestone, conforms to St. Ange's description of the Foxes' tepees as "fort petites et pratiquées dans la terre comme les tamières des renards dont ils portent le nom:" Steward, 374; W.H.C., 17:111.

16. The Foxes' fort was in a little clump of woods: W.H.C., 17:111.

Q. That is to say, the clump of woods was between two open spaces of extent not revealed, which are the *esplanades* of Plan du Fort, whereas the Vermilion was bordered by a continuous "lisière de bois."

This difficulty might be expected in examining any site; for river-banks in Illinois are likely to be continuously wooded. The site east of Lowell proves upon inspection to be free from this difficulty.

The site lies between two ravines, which in themselves would provide *esplanades* as shown in Plan du Fort. Working hurriedly either in building or repairing a fort at this point, the builders would have felled the soft-wood trees of the ravines rather than the oaks of the hillside. Thus the



*esplanades* would be left bare at each side of a clump of oak trees.

17. The battlefield of Sept. 9, and therefore the Foxes' fort, were "between the river Wabache and the river of the Illinois, about 60 leagues to the south of the extremity or foot of Lake Michigan, to the east southeast of le Rocher in the Illinois Country:" W.H.C., 17:129, translation confirmed with reference to the French transcript.

R. No such point exists; the data are mutually contradictory. But if the expression *to the south* (in original, *au sud*) is understood as representing a previously original Canadian *au dessous*, the difficulty is resolved and the neighborhood of the Rock (and no other possible point) is indicated.

S. Although the foregoing sources agree that all military events in the campaign of 1730 took place between the Illinois and Wabash Rivers, the sources have been interpreted to locate the Foxes' fort on Big Rock Creek near the Fox River of Illinois and the village of Plano: John F. Steward, *Lost Maramech and Earliest Chicago* (Chicago, 1903).

T. Historians of McLean County, Ill., have indicated for the battlefield of Sept. 9 and for the Foxes' fort certain sites near Arrowsmith in that county: Illinois State Historical Society, *Transactions for 1908*, pp. 184-91. This location is based on misinterpretation of an assertion made twenty-two years later by an acting-governor of Quebec (not, as has been represented, the commandant of Detroit) that the battle was fought in the "place" known at that latter time as the "Prairie of the Mascoutens." By that time the French word *prairie* had assumed its modern English meaning. The Prairie of the Mascoutens was the northeastern part of Grand Prairie, including thousands of square miles.



## HISTORIC SPOTS IN HENRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS

*by*

LYDIA COLBY

Were I writing of Amesbury, Andover, or Lynn, Massachusetts, or Sangamon, Menard, or Lee counties in Illinois, family tradition might give me a personal slant on my story. But writing of Henry County, prior to the Civil War, my material has all been gleaned from the writings of others, or being historically minded, from the spoken word, written down at the time the tale was told to me, by those few early pioneers it has been my privilege to know. The oldest in time of these tales of settlement, came from the lips of Albert Benedict, who came from Cornwall, Vermont, with his parents and three brothers, Able, Foster, and George, to Henry County, Illinois, April 25, 1852. Like many of his generation, his memory for facts and dates was very active and accurate. This is his story:—

1828

Ever so many years ago a La Salle paper published the story of a French hunter and trapper who lived and trapped in this part of Illinois. The paper was lost, and few were living when Mr. Benedict told me this story, but he remembered the circumstance.

In 1828, this French hunter and trapper, whose name has been forgotten, came in a canoe down the Illinois River, portaged over to Green River by way of Coal Creek and St. Peter's Marsh, a swamp on what is now known as the Allerton Ranch, and came to Shabbona grove in Cornwall



Township to hunt and trap. Eighty rods south, and forty rods east of the Atkinson highway, on a farm afterwards owned by Captain Jack, and now occupied by Charles Hoogerwerf, there was an excellent spring of water. The French hunter built a log house beside this spring, and from brick that he brought with him in his canoe, built himself a fireplace. What happened when he left this home or what became of his cabin, I do not know, but the brick of the fireplace still remained in 1852, when Mr. Benedict came to the county. Mr. Benedict felt that if the leaves and soil of years of accumulation were scraped away, some of the brick would be found there yet.

Elijah Benedict, father of Mr. Albert Benedict, surveyed and named Cornwall Township in 1855 and 1856, his boys carrying the chain for him. He named it Cornwall for his old home township in Vermont. The home he built for his family was not three miles from the log cabin built by the French hunter and trapper in 1828.

If we knew where to make the connection, this French hunter was probably one of many who collected furs for Gurdon Saltonstall Hubbard for John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company, whose biography was recently published in the Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society. Mr. Hubbard has been called the father of modern business in Danville and Chicago. The Chicago suburb, Hubbard Woods, was named for him.

1835

Dr. Thomas Baker was the second white man to come and fail to make Henry County his permanent abode. He came April 8, 1835, and lived in his wagon at the mouth of Green River for a time, became discouraged, turned his wagon south, and disappeared from view forever.

James and Thomas Glenn and Anthony Hunt followed the ruts the Baker wagon had made and came into Colona



## HISTORIC SPOTS IN HENRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Township, May 13, 1835, to what is now Section 20 of that township. In that same month they built a hut of poles, with clapboards for a roof and with no door, save for poles laid up to keep out wild animals when they were within. On May 20, 1835, they turned the first furrow with a plow that was turned in Henry County. This was in Sec. 17, Colona Township.

In the spring of 1836, the brothers built a hewed log house, 45 by 20 feet, which was their home for some time. It was really an inn for the traveling public, and was a stage station on the stage road between Stephenson (Rock Island) and Dixon when the Frink and Walker stages began to run.

James Glenn did not marry until January, 1837, when he married Nancy Kincaid of Rock Island, and they made their home on Section 20, Colona Township, at the foot of the hill where Glenwood cemetery now is.

Earl P. Aldrich, his wife and father-in-law, came to Phoenix Township, driving five yoke of oxen July 2, 1835. His son, Henry S., born December 16, 1835, was the first white child born in Henry County.

Farmington, in Rock Island County, was the post office for this part of the world, and the government store at Rock Island was the nearest source of supplies.

On September 9, 1835, George Brandenburg, a native of Maryland, with his wife, came into the county and settled in Colona Township. Their log cabin became the favorite inn of the whole countryside. It was on a cross road of travel between Stephenson and Dixon on one highway and Knoxville and Albany on the Mississippi on the other. It had much traffic. Brandenburg soon built a second log cabin beside his first. The two cabins were under one roof, with a covered passageway between. The passageway was probably a good place for saddles and saddlebags. To this



inn in 1836 came James M. Allan, "a young man of 21, with education, high ideals, and great activity and perseverance, he had his finger in most of the things happening in his lifetime."

Brandenburg built a two story frame house in 1837, which still stands (and still unpainted, after the manner of the South where lumber is plentiful). It stands in the forgotten town of Dayton on the hard road not far from the Dayton Cemetery. The county's first election was held at Brandenburg's Inn, June 19, 1837.

The present owner of the inn, in repairing the old house, was careful to keep the old outlines of the building because of its historic interest.

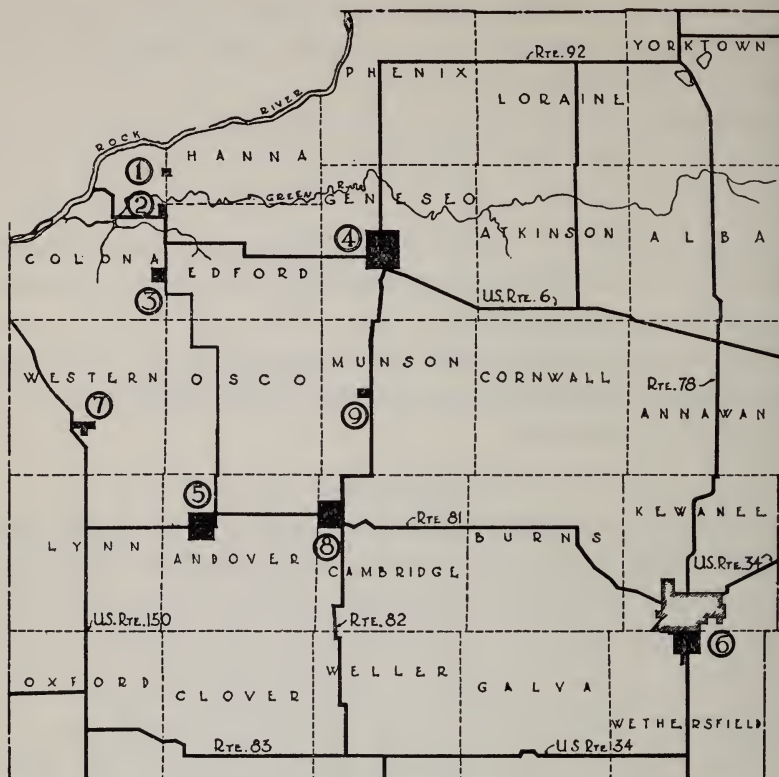
#### ANDOVER

In September, 1835, Ithamer Pillsbury, a Presbyterian minister from Long Island, New York, Noah T. Pike, and Archibald Slaughter, as agents for the New York Association, and William S. and Jesse Woolsey, as land seekers, came to Andover Township. They came by the Ohio, Mississippi, and Illinois river route. Pillsbury had been out in 1834 and knew of the Edwards River valley. The agents entered 30,000 acres of land, and provided for a section to be laid out in town lots. This was the north half of section 17 and the south half of section 8. It was laid out after the pattern of New Haven, Connecticut, with very wide streets. No one was allowed to build closer to the street than thirty feet, without special permission. A college and fine church were planned but never built.

Pillsbury put up some buildings and began a mill on the Edwards River. It was the first mill in the county and drew custom from as far as Prophetstown. A few settlers came later. Jesse Woolsey had a well-liked inn. Andover's post office was Knoxville, thirty miles away.

Pillsbury was a leader in county affairs. In fact our





## HENRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Scale 1 2 3 in Miles

Showing: Paved Roads; —: Principal Rivers; ---: Political Townships; ----

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. DAYTON·BRANDENBURG'S INN               | 6. WETHERSFIELD                          |
| 2. GREEN RIVER·formerly·OAKLEY            | 7. ORION·formerly·LAGRANGE               |
| 3. MORRISTOWN·2 <sup>nd</sup> COUNTY·SEAT | 8. CAMBRIDGE·3 <sup>rd</sup> and PRESENT |
| 4. GENESEO                                | COUNTY SEAT                              |
| 5. ANDOVER                                | 9. RICHMOND·1 <sup>st</sup> COUNTY SEAT  |



present court house in Cambridge stands on land given the county by this pioneer preacher, but his family went elsewhere to live. The few original settlers moved away. Eric Janson's colony overflowed into this section and built the largest church in the county. Jennie Lind gave a concert in this church and gave \$1000 to help in its erection.

#### WETHERSFIELD OF THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION

When Ithamer Pillsbury returned east from selecting land for the Andover Colony, he was interviewed by Rev. Caleb J. Tenney of Wethersfield, Connecticut, as to locating a Wethersfield Colony. In order to create a Protestant Mississippi valley, Tenney thought the East should colonize. Pillsbury and Tenney planned a second colony in Henry County, to be located near the first. This second colony was to be Wethersfield under the Connecticut Association. A stock company was formed at \$250 per share and \$25,000 was raised. Ithamer Pillsbury, Sylvester Blish, and Elizur Goodrich were sent west in February, 1836, as a Committee of Purchase to secure lands for the colony. Each shareholder was to receive 160 acres of prairie land, 20 acres of timber, and one town lot.

Goodrich was a civil engineer, and could survey; Pillsbury had had experience in colonizing; and Blish was a sound business man, energetic and trustworthy. This committee came the river way to Peoria, thence overland on foot to Knoxville, Henderson's Grove, and Andover. But Andover was not populated yet, so the committee went on to an empty cabin in Sugar Tree Grove (East Cambridge). At Barren Grove in townships 14 and 15, now Kewanee and Wethersfield townships, Goodrich surveyed and staked 99 townships—later the one hundredth township was entered. The transfer was made from the government to Goodrich and Blish. They deeded it to the Secretary and Treasurer of the Connecticut Association, who in turn deeded it to the



## HISTORIC SPOTS IN HENRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS

individual members. Each member was to receive 160 acres of prairie land, 20 acres of timber, and one town lot.

The Committee of Purchase returned to Connecticut and reported. A second committee of three was appointed to plat the town and divide the timber. At the time Barren Grove was fifteen miles long and six miles wide. Henry G. Little, J. F. Willard, and Rev. Joseph Goodrich, a returned missionary from the Sandwich Islands, were the committee. John Kilvington had come into Kewanee Township in the spring of 1836. The second Wethersfield committee wintered with him in his cabin. Willard built a cabin that winter. In the spring of 1837 Sullivan Howard came and built a board cabin, hauling his lumber seventy miles from Spoon River. The green lumber shrank until a log one had to be built later. Henry G. Little raised a log cabin for himself in March, 1837. Many settlers came that summer, but of all the long list of shareholders, but four came west personally.

The old colony church of Wethersfield served as school-house as well as church and Roderick Stewart's daughter, Permelia, afterward Mrs. Dr. S. T. Hume of Moline and Geneseo, taught their first school in it. The log church was built in the summer of 1838 and in November of that year the Wethersfield Congregational Church was organized. It had fifteen members. The log structure was replaced by a frame building in 1849. With the coming of the C. B. and Q. railroad and the building of the town of Kewanee and the organizing of a Congregational church there on August 7, 1855, most of the members of the Wethersfield church transferred to the Kewanee one. Henry G. Little, Sylvester Blish, and Capt. Sullivan Howard were names that figured in the early affairs of the county.

### MORRISTOWN

In the winter of 1835-36, a notice was inserted in several New York City papers, calling a meeting of all persons



interested in western colonization. A colony was formed and organized under the name of The New York Colony, with forty or fifty members. Charles Oakley was their leader. He and C. C. Wilcox were asked to go to Illinois to select about a township of land. They came to Henry County and made their selection in Western and Colona townships. They secured in all 20,000 acres. Each individual member of the colony was to erect within two years, a house and buildings to cost not less than \$200.

The business arrangements not being very good, only about one-fifth of the members came to the colony. Joshua Harper of Virginia, Charles Oakley, N. W. Washburn, Charles Davenport, Jr., and Luke Sheldon came in 1836. A few came later, so that the colony had ten families in all. A small town on Green River, laid out by Thomas Davenport in 1865, was called Oakley, but even that trace of the New York Colony is gone now, for the town has long since been called Green River.

When the courthouse and hotel at Richmond burned in May, 1839, court met that fall in the stable there and again in the following spring, after which it followed the clerk's desk and met in Geneseo. Then Morristown secured the county seat by offering some town lots, a quarter-section of land, and \$1000 in money. Court met in the colony house for one session, while a new court house 18 by 24 feet and a story and a half high, was building. It was scarcely completed, when dissatisfaction in its location at the extreme northwest corner of a big county, caused the people to have it changed. It was moved to Sugar Tree Grove, now Cambridge, to land owned by Ithamer Pillsbury. Joshua Harper pledged that 'Morristown would not try to hold it, if it went to the middle of the Winnebago Swamp.' He wanted a solid county vote, as he was running for the state legislature. Court sat at Morristown from May, 1842, to May, 1844.



## HISTORIC SPOTS IN HENRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS

### LA GRANGE COLONY

La Grange Colony, formed almost entirely on the pattern of the New York Colony at Morristown, purchased 18,000 acres of land in what is now Western, Lynn, and Osco townships in 1836. This colony seems to have been organized largely for land speculation. We hear nothing said about religion, education, temperance, or anti-slavery as in the Geneseo Colony. They did plan for a seminary, a public road, and a sugar beet company, none of which materialized.

One of the first things promoters of these colonies did, was to advertise extensively. In some of the Eastern papers a slough was called Spoon River. Pictures were made of it showing steamboats and mills on it. Mrs. Harry Manville of Geneseo once showed me an advertisement of the Geneseo Colony. A boat was pulling up to a landing pier on Geneseo Creek, while an admiring crowd stood on the pier waiting to greet friends or to embark on the boat. (The stream is 12 to 15 feet wide only.)

La Grange's first permanent settler was M. L. Lloyd from Bucks County, Pennsylvania. He came in 1837, purchased 240 acres of land from the La Grange promoters for \$3.33 per acre, when he could have obtained it almost anywhere else in the county for half that. His land was two miles from the proposed village of La Grange, which property is still in the possession of his heirs.

Two Blackfan families, a Trego, and an Engle family are among the early names added to Mr. Lloyd's. La Grange was later called Deanington and then Orion. In 1843 there were but five families in the colony.

### GENESEO COLONY

In Old Stone Church in South Bergen, Geneseo County, New York, on September 13, 1836, a group of colonists covenanted with God and with one another, organizing a self-governing band of disciples to go out and become a



church in the wilderness. A hard rain storm hindered the Roderick Stewart family from attending this meeting when the First Congregational church of Geneseo, Illinois, was formed, so there were but thirteen members originally. Elisha Cone and John C. Ward were chosen deacons.

Six days later, on September 19, 1836, five families, numbering forty persons in all, started on the long journey overland to Henry County, Illinois, where Cromwell Bartlett, Roderick Stewart, and J. C. Ward had explored earlier in the year and secured land for them. These three men had been directed here by Judge Ford (later Governor Ford) as they came through Chicago.

As the colony came through Michigan City, Indiana, they stopped at the cabin of one John Baker Taylor from Antrim, New Hampshire. They stayed for a couple of days, while the women washed their clothes and the men overhauled their wagons. They so imbued Mr. Taylor with the advantages of their new home that he followed them out to Henry County the next year and settled on Spring Creek, east of the Geneseo Colony.

It was cold and rainy and later even snowy that fall, so the travelers suffered great hardship, but though they needed to arrive at their destination and provide shelter for winter, they never failed to stop for the Sabbath. When they reached the Princeton Colony, it was decided that most of the women and children should remain there until shelter could be built for them. The Bartlett families went on ahead of the others, lost their way and went to Brandenburg's, northwest of their destination. They were piloted from there across Green River to Geneseo Creek and pitched their tents south of the creek where Geneseo Chapter, D.A.R., has placed a boulder at the fork of the road near Oakwood Cemetery. The first cabin built was Cromwell Bartlett's. It was south of the town site, but near good oak timber.



## HISTORIC SPOTS IN HENRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS

The Bartletts were soon joined by the men of the party and Narcissa Stewart, who came to cook for them. This was November 19, 1836, just two months after leaving New York. They soon raised two log cabins for the Bartletts. The first cabin erected on the town site was built for Elisha Cone, built where the Herrin House, west of Dr. Murphy's, stands. A cabin for Roderick Stewart was built where the Swedish Lutheran church now stands and Reuben Cone's cabin was built where the Otis Hoit house is. All houses were built of unpeeled logs, chinked with mud, roofed with long shakes or slats of wood held down with poles. No nails were used. They had none.

As church and school were the twin ideals of the colony, a building was put up on the south side of the public square. It was eighteen feet square, built of poles laid up three feet high, with crotches to set poles up in the corners to sustain a roof made of wagon covers fastened together. The floor was of bass-wood puncheon. Miss Susannah Stewart was the first teacher here at the first school in the county.

As the colony stood for abolition, several houses in town were used as stations on the underground railway, that helped runaway slaves to escape.

We are a small inland country town, but to ourselves at least, we have many interesting spots of historical interest, and none is more interesting than the grave of our Geneseo Chapter D.A.R. founder, and many years secretary of the Old Settlers' organization, Ella Hume Taylor. She lies in the same lot with her pioneer grandparents, Roderick R. Stewart and wife Clarissa, in beautiful Oakwood Cemetery.

With her going our county historical society seems to have died. After the death of the original settlers, there was no one more interested in keeping alive their stories and the traditions of the past than Mrs. Taylor.



BISHOP HILL COLONY

The Bishop Hill colony is the only one of the six colonies of Henry County that came from foreign shores, and the only one that came because of religious persecution. Like the Pilgrims of 1620, the followers of Eric Janson were dissenters from the established church of their country. The Swedes had not learned that religion grows strong under persecution.

Soon about 1500 followers were ready to follow their leader, Eric Janson, into a land where there was religious freedom to worship as one's conscience dictated. There were not enough ships traveling from Sweden to America to bring these colonists all at once. Janson and the first group came to New York and from there to Chicago and Bishop Hill in 1846.

This colony was conducted on communistic principles. They bought land in Weller where Bishop Hill is, and later in Osco and Western townships. No settlers in the county endured greater hardships. Lacking money, some of the settlers walked all the way from Chicago to Bishop Hill. They lived in tents and mud caves until log cabins and later brick colony houses could be built. They suffered untold misery from cholera, so many dying at once that great trenches received their dead.

Everybody worked. They established a saw mill and made lumber, found good clay and made brick. They raised flax and made linen and carpet matting, they made their own flour, and developed the broomcorn industry. They were almost entirely self-sustaining. But dissatisfaction with their leader arose, and one Reuth or Root, shot him in the court house in Cambridge. Dissatisfaction increased with his successor and the people clamored for a division of their common holdings. A division was begun in 1861 and completed in 1862 when individual ownership became a fact in the Bishop Hill Colony.



## HISTORIC SPOTS IN HENRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS

The people of Bishop Hill have a reunion every year and live over the extraordinary events of their settlement. One of the old colony houses burned a few years ago but there are enough standing to make this still one of the most interesting historic spots in our county. While the pictures in the old colony church are crude, the artist has preserved for all time their quaint methods of farming and the early life of the colony.

### INDIAN TRAILS

Mrs. Lucinda Wigant Clark, who crossed the Mississippi River from Louisa County, Iowa, to Illinois at New Boston, in December 1851, with her husband William and son James, saw the Indians on their old trail known as the Great Sauk Trail. They were probably on a trapping expedition along the streams when she saw them, for they were camped along Mud Creek at the point where the Annawan village Mud Creek bridge is, just west of the village. When Mrs. Wigant saw them, they were roasting and eating muskrats, which they considered quite a delicacy. From this point on Mud Creek, the trail led south and west across the county to Sugar Tree Grove (East Cambridge) and probably came from Prophetstown to the Annawan Mud Creek bridge.

The next known point in the trail after the one on Mud Creek, is at Hickory Point, on the south side of the road inside the fence a few feet, on the Jerome Black farm. James A. Clark, son of Louisa Wigant Clark, remembers seeing this part of the trail when it was worn down a foot and a half. From here it ran west to the McConnoughey hill, now in the possession of Mrs. Laura Farnum Nickerson. Thence the trail led south to the Calvary Presbyterian church. The trail was directly under this building. When the building was sold and moved away around 1905, the Sauk trail was still plainly seen.

Running southwest to the spring on the Jackson Brown



pasture in Burns Township, where the Indians used to go for water, the trail led to Sugar Tree Grove on the Susan Jennings place in Burns Township, Section 7. From the Jennings place the trail goes into East Cambridge where it is lost to me.

The Sauk trail, as I remember to have seen it at Hickory Point, was not over two feet wide, and a foot deep. Often the pioneer roads followed these trails as they lay in the most advantageous levels and led directly from point to point. The plow and civilization soon obliterated the trails in all but a few protected places.

#### REDISCOVERING RICHMOND

On the morning of May 24, 1934, Mrs. Sue Williams Bradley, granddaughter, and Miss Louise Bradley, great-granddaughter of Major James M. Allan, donor to the county of the 120 acres on which Richmond was built, took me with them to locate the exact spot in that lost city of Henry County's first court house and the hotel kept by George Harris, who was the builder of both buildings.

We went out over State Route 82 to the southeast quarter of Section 17, Munson Township. Mrs. James Ensey and her brother, John Young of Osco, both children of James Young, early owner of the site of Richmond (the site is still in the possession of his heirs), joined us in the search for the site. Miss Louise drove her car across the first field to a fence, thence we proceeded on foot to the plowed field where the site is. Mr. Young as a boy had plowed this field many times. Mrs. Ensey had gathered numerous bits of broken crockery from it for her play house as a child. For many years a persistent grape vine came up on the site of former habitation.

Mrs. Bradley, Mrs. Ensey, and Mr. John Young leading, walked over the freshly plowed ground, until they reached a spot where they all gathered bits of broken blue figured



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dishes and melted glass, and knew they were on the spot where once the buildings of Richmond stood. There had been but the courthouse, hotel and stable built. According to the plat of Richmond at Cambridge courthouse these buildings must have been in the southern public square, between Third and Fourth streets and Maple and Walnut streets as boundaries. Whether the three standing over the former site of the buildings, dreamed the dream that Major Allan probably did in the thirties of a fair inland city on a ridge of the rolling prairie, I do not know. The site faces the front door of the Thomas Young property on State Route 82, and to the south was the James Ensey house, i.e., it is 95 rods west of the east section line and 54 rods north of the south section line of section 17, Munson Township.

These two children of James Young, Sr., are the best living evidence of the exact location of our first courthouse. The mute testimony of melted glass and broken pottery, and formerly of a persistent grape vine, bear out their evidence as does the plat of Cambridge.

Mr. John Young told of finding a bar of melted gold on this spot, when he plowed the field as a young man. He carried it in his pocket for a long time, but finally lost it on what is now the James Ensey place. He did not know its value as he never had it appraised, but several pieces of gold money had been melted together to make the bar, he was sure.

Stewart Ogden located the site of the second county seat of Henry County, which was at the now lost city of Morris-town. It is opposite the James Stevenson farm in Colona Township, on the motor-fuel-tax road.

Henry G. Little of Wethersfield colony tells in some reminiscences of the origin of the Richmond fire. It was caused by a live coal falling out of the cookstove in the hotel kitchen, through a crack in the floor on to some shav-



ings underneath. Evidently there was no basement built. Almost at once the fire was out of control. Mr. George Harris who had built the hotel and courthouse had tied up his money in the former building, and as it was a total loss to him, he moved back to New York City, his former home.

Morristown was so far to the northwest corner of the county that it took people from Wethersfield three days to go, attend to business and return. That was impossible. The people themselves voted to remove it to a piece of land owned by Ithamer Pillsbury, at Sugar Tree Grove. The moving of the courthouse built at Morristown to the new site was accomplished by ox teams—a hurculean task, but it was done. C. C. Blish of Wethersfield surveyed and platted the new site for \$14.00. Capt. Sullivan Howard built the first new courthouse at Cambridge at a cost of approximately \$3000 and had it completed July 28, 1845. At that time it was the big house in the county and served for school house, church, lecture hall, political meetings, secret societies, dances, etc. The next courthouse was finished in 1866. The present brick one was accepted by the county board in 1880.

#### MAJOR JAMES M. ALLAN AND HENRY COUNTY

While not of the Geneseo colony, probably no one had more influence on the early life of the colony and of Henry county, than James M. Allan. Born in Sumner County, Tennessee, in 1814, of English and Scotch ancestors, his father John Allan being a slave-holding Presbyterian minister who later removed to Huntsville, Alabama, his early life was very different from his later years.

James M. and his older brother William T. Allan were sent North to school, to Lane Seminary, Cincinnati, Ohio, where they both imbibed anti-slavery ideas. William T. became a preacher and an anti-slavery lecturer of some note. These two brothers were not very happy when they



returned from school to a rich slave-holding community. Both finally came North, William T. to lecture and preach, and James M. to invest in the rich prairie lands of Illinois. He had heard considerable talk of this country, for after the building of the Erie Canal, the tide of immigration had turned westward.

The father, Rev. John Allan, gave his son James, not yet twenty-one years old, \$100 to invest in Illinois for himself. He purchased a fine saddle horse, Davy Crockett, and riding it left Alabama for the Illinois country in October, 1835. He spent that winter with his aunt, Catherine Allan Barr, at Carrollton, Greene County, Illinois, and came north to Henry County in the spring of 1836, bringing some \$700 or \$800 belonging to his father and brother-in-law to invest in land. He made his home at Brandenburg's Inn in the town of Dayton in Colona Township. Of the Brandenburgs, Mr. Allan says in his autobiography: "He was a good man, and his wife a most excellent woman."

Mr. Allan entered land for himself and relatives, riding his horse eighty miles to Galena to register it. With the money safely invested, he was ready to report by December, 1836. Enroute to Huntsville, Alabama, he stopped at his Aunt Barr's in Carrollton.

Up to this time, Henry County had been attached to Knox County for judicial purposes. Vandalia was the state capital at that time and the legislature was in session. After resting a few days at Carrollton, Mr. Allan went on to Vandalia for the purpose of getting an act passed by the legislature for the organization of Henry County. The legislature, on March 2, 1837, "by an act approved" organized Henry County and appointed three commissioners from adjoining counties to locate the county seat, "and to do and perform such acts as were necessary to enable the county to assume its position as an organized county." An election



was authorized to take place at Brandenburg's Inn in June, 1837.

Such an election did take place on June 19, 1837, and the three commissioners who governed the counties of Illinois at that time were elected. They were Ithamer Pillsbury of Andover, Philip Hannah of Hannah Township, and Joshua Browning from Phoenix Township, I think. James M. Allan was made county clerk, Joshua Harper, recorder of deeds, and Robert McCulloch, sheriff. Later an election was held to elect a militia officer, with the rank of major, who was empowered to call the able-bodied men of the county together in case of need of protection from Indians. Mr. Allan was elected and was known the rest of his life as Major Allan.

But to go back to Mr. Allan's visit to Vandalia. He says: "This was my first visit to a state capital and first knowledge of the ways and manners of state legislators. . . . While I was there a bill was passed to borrow ten million dollars at ten per cent per annum, to be used in constructing railroads. The bill originally had but few projected lines of railroad. But they were increased, in order to insure votes enough to pass the bill, until the state was marked off like a checker board, and finally to be doubly sure of having votes enough, a provision was inserted in the bill, to pay all counties in the state, not provided by the terms of the bill with railway promises, a pro-rata share of the ten millions, according to population.

"The bill became a law, and Charles Oakley was appointed a commissioner to go to England to negotiate a loan, which was done. The result was disastrous. A railroad was completed from Springfield, via Jacksonville, to Naples on the Illinois river, and that was all, literally all. Embankments were thrown up, masonry commenced in many places, but the strap road, above mentioned, was the sum total of the ten millions. Hard times came to the state of Illinois,



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partly caused by this bad mistake in legislation, and partly from the failure of nearly all banks in the west. The banks were called 'wild cat,' 'red dog,' and other pet names. They all broke down in 1837."

Major Allan tells all this in his autobiography, written in 1883, as well as many strange adventures in the new country such as crossing Peoria Lake on ice on Davy Crockett, who was not used to ice and was afraid of it, driving hogs to market through snow drifts at Cosner's Corners, the death of his pet horse, Davy Crockett, in fording Rock River in icy water, the first election in Henry county, the establishment of the first county seat at Richmond, etc. All make a long interesting story.

### RICHMOND

It is of the lost town of Richmond, I want to tell you. Before appearing before the state legislature in the early part of 1837, Mr. Allan had in his mind, located the county seat as nearly in the center of the county as possible, that being to him the fairest location to all parties concerned. During the summer of 1836, he mounted his horse, and using his compass, and a government marked tree in Sugar Tree Grove as a starting place, counting the steps of his horse, he rode due north from the marked tree until he crossed a trail from Spring Creek. This was approximately the center of the county.

Mr. Allan did not miss the center far, even with this crude surveying. His center was the southeast quarter of Section 17, Town 16, Range 3 East of the 4th Principal Meridian. There was a beautiful rise of land on the expanse of the prairie here. He entered the 160 acres for himself and Gilbert C. R. Mitchell. In November, 1836, in consideration of \$104.75, Gilbert C. R. Mitchell gave Mr. Allan a warranty deed for the undivided half of the above described land. Evidently not quite satisfied with his title,



when the land was deeded to the three first county commissioners of Henry County, he had G. C. R. Mitchell sign the deed with him. The legislature appointed to locate the county seat of Henry County, Francis Voris, of Peoria County, Jonas Rewalt, of Fulton County, and Isaac Murphy of Warren County. They met at Brandenburg's Inn in October, 1837. Men from Andover, Geneseo, Morristown, Ford Town (a lost city on Spring Creek), and Mr. Allan representing Richmond, as he had named his prospective town in Munson Township, were present representing their claims. Evidently the center of the county and the offer of a gift of 120 acres to the county, seemed fair to the commissioners, for they selected Mr. Allan's site as the future county seat.

The Major and G. C. R. Mitchell transferred 120 acres from the south end of the southeast quarter of Section 17, Munson Township, to the three county commissioners, Pillsbury, Browning, and Hannah, the Major reserving forty acres across the north end of the quarter for himself. The entire tract was platted and lots sold to would-be citizens of the town of Richmond. George Harris was given certain lots for himself for building a courthouse and an inn for himself. He at once set about the building of the inn and courthouse; the former was 36 by 40 feet and two stories high; the latter was 16 by 20 feet and a story and a half high. The first circuit court in the county was held in the not-quite-completed courthouse in April, 1839.

Since coming to the county in 1836, Major Allan had lived at Brandenburg's Inn until his marriage to Susannah Stewart, daughter of R. R. Stewart, and the first teacher in the county. The marriage occurred March 6, 1839, and immediately after it they moved to the inn at Richmond and began housekeeping in an upper room there.

One day in May while Major Allan was at Andover mill some ten miles away, a fire occurred at the new county seat.



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Henry G. Little of Wethersfield writes that the fire was caused by a live coal falling out of the cook stove in the hotel kitchen, dropping through a crack in the floor to some shavings underneath. Almost at once the fire was out of control. Mr. Tillson came to the mill where Major Allan was, and reported that he had seen a fire from the north side of the grove, in the direction of Richmond. As the tavern was the largest building in the county, and the only house to be seen in that direction, of course, it must be the buildings of the new town. "I was not long in reaching home," writes Major Allan, "to find the house burning to the ground. Most everything was taken out of the house before it burned. Mr. Harris was keeping several prisoners at the time. They were chained to logs when the fire broke out. They cut their manacles loose with an axe at the wood pile, then worked like beavers to get things out of the house. One of them cleared out our room nicely of everything, not omitting the desk containing all court papers, including his own indictment. . . .

"This was a great loss to Mr. Harris and family. They came here from New York City and were not wealthy. They moved into the stable. My wife and self loaded what little we had into a wagon and went in to Mr. Stewart's house in Geneseo.

"The spring court was held in the stable, one end of which was set apart for that purpose. Judge Ford had held court there in the spring of 1839. Purple of Peoria was prosecuting attorney. Knox and Denny were attorneys in attendance, with several others whose names I do not now remember. The grand jury had the use of a hay stack for their deliberations, while the petit jury had a straw pile for their accommodation."

### VANDALIA AGAIN

"In the winter of 1838-39, I made a second trip to Vandalia on horseback, particularly to prevent Henry county



from losing its southeast corner. Col. Henderson of Stark county, a fine looking and very smart man, was representative in the legislature and making effort to have a portion of the southeast corner of Henry county attached to Stark county, which was then, as now, a very small county. Our representative lived in Monmouth, Warren county, named Berry, I think but am not certain. He succeeded in keeping Henry county as it is today, a large fine county of land, and among the most populous and prosperous counties of this great state of Illinois. While at Vandalia I received from the treasurer, the sum of \$150 due to Henry county, for and on account of, the great railroad bill of the winter preceding. After having provided in said bill for all the counties having settlement enough to demand such notice, it was further provided that all counties in the state, not provided in the bill with a railway charter, should have a pro rata share of the money borrowed, as the population of the county was to the whole population of the state. Henry county had about 150 inhabitants—I got \$150 in money as Henry county's share of the great blunder, if no worse. . . .

“After the spring term of court in Richmond in 1839, all the courts were held in Geneseo, because the clerk was there with the books and papers. At the next session of the legislature, after the fire at Richmond, an act was passed for relocating the county seat by commissioners. We had concluded that Richmond was not a very good place to live, and made no effort to retain it there.”

After tarrying at Geneseo with the county business for a time, the legislature appointed a second commission to relocate the county seat. With the offer of land and \$1000 in money, from Morristown in the Oakley colony, the county seat was located there and a court house built. Morristown was six miles from the west county line and the same distance from the river. It was a two days' journey for Wethersfield to get any county business attended to. So by



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popular vote, the county seat was again changed to its present location at Cambridge on some land given the county by Ithamer Pillsbury.

In the late 'forties Major Allan ran for and was elected to the state legislature, with the understanding that he was to try to locate a railroad between Chicago and Rock Island. With the aid of Ninian W. Edwards, son of a former governor; Speaker of the House, Judge Breese, and others, he was able to secure the passage of a bill in the spring session of 1851 and the Chicago and Rock Island road was assured. —“Geneseo at once became a very busy town as soon as the railroad came here. Business came from Galesburg, Prophetstown, Rock Island. Four horse coaches had been plenty between Geneseo and Rock Island before the railroad reached Rock Island.”

The draining of some swamp lands, north of Geneseo, occupied Major Allan and a company in which he was a partner, for some time. The drainage was evidently not an entire success, for the Major says, “When it was a rainy season, the land was as wet as ever.”

A mercantile venture and a saw mill on Geneseo Creek occupied him for a time, but what he considered his biggest, hardest job, was the securing a bill for digging the Hennepin Canal. Years of thought and labor went into this effort. He would go to Springfield and labor with the legislators there to convert them to the idea of water transportation, only to lose the passage of his bill by one vote. It was discouraging business, but he kept on. Finally with the help of others he secured the interest of the United States Government and it went through as a government project, not as a state one. But its accomplishment came after the death of Major Allan who had worked so long and hard for the measure.

A small great-granddaughter, preaching to an audience of small brother and sister on the omnipotence of God, was



overheard to say something like this: "God is wonderful. He made the earth and the sun and the birds and the flowers and us and everything—only the Hennepin canal. God did not make that, Grandpa Allan made that."

In his later years Major Allan built a fine brick house in Geneseo. After his death it was purchased for the North Western Normal School. When the school passed out of existence, the building was purchased by John Hammond and given to the City of Geneseo for a city hospital.

James M. Allan died December 20, 1885, at the age of seventy-one. He had served his county as clerk of election at its first election, June 19, 1837; he was its first county clerk and circuit clerk; he secured the separate entity of Henry County, having it set aside from Knox County; he later kept its southern boundary intact, when Stark County attempted to annex Wethersfield Township; he helped secure the passage of the Rock Island Railway bill at Springfield; and the United States Government's undertaking the building of the Hennepin Canal; he served as a member of the state legislature, as township supervisor, and as mayor of Geneseo. His seventy-one years were active ones, full of good works for his town and county.



# BANK FAILURES IN CHICAGO BEFORE 1925

By

R. G. THOMAS

During prosperous times banks, like other business institutions, succeed in performing their functions smoothly and without interruption. They care for the needs of borrowers and depositors to the benefit of all concerned. Failure of banks at such times are so rare as to seem of little importance to the average person. With reasonably good luck he may completely escape them. The present generation, however, has had no such luck. The rising tide of bank failures, beginning in the West with the collapse of the speculative agricultural boom of 1920, terminated in the catastrophic collapse of the whole banking system in 1933 and made the question of bank failures of vital importance to everyone. A study of the record of one large city is, therefore, especially timely in revealing some of the causes for bank failures.

Chicago's experience with bank failures began early. Its first bank, a branch of the Second State Bank of Illinois, was opened late in 1835. It closed, after a somewhat checkered career, seven years later.<sup>1</sup> The losses to the bank's creditors were small, however, for by 1859 only \$150,000 in obligations remained unpaid for the whole system.<sup>2</sup> After the closing of this Second State Bank of Illinois in 1842,

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<sup>1</sup>Dowrie, George W., *The Development of Banking in Illinois, 1817-1863*, p. 67, 103.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid*, p. 121. It is interesting to note that the obligations of the Chicago Branch were largely in the form of circulating notes. On January 7, 1840, notes in circulation amounted to \$528,260, while individual deposits were \$70,536. Illinois, *Reports of Session, 1839-40*, pp. 350-1.



Chicago was without legally recognized incorporated banks until 1851 when it became possible to organize banks with the note issue privilege under the Free Banking Act of that year. In the meantime private bankers and insurance companies were doing a general banking business, even going so far in some instances as to issue certificates of deposit which were in common circulation as money. The new banks incorporated under the law of 1851, like the branch of the Second State Bank of Illinois, were mainly engaged in the issue of notes, which was permitted when specified approved bonds were deposited with the proper state officers. In 1854, about the time when free banking reached its peak in the city, the notes in circulation of the free banks in Chicago were \$730,000 compared to deposits of approximately \$150,000.<sup>3</sup>

All of the free banks in Chicago, save one, were liquidated by 1858 as a result of the competition of "illegal bankers" who issued private currency which gained wide acceptance in spite of the fact that it was redeemable in specie at a discount of one per cent or in New York exchange at three-fourths of one per cent discount. The free banks experienced difficulty in keeping their note issues afloat for they were legally compelled to redeem their notes in specie at par.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps this was fortunate, for the early liquidation of these banks in Chicago prevented their meeting the fate of the downstate banks. The bonds (or stocks as they were then called) of various Southern states were commonly used as collateral for the note issue of the Illinois banks. Liquidating and retiring their note issues when they did, the Chicago banks were able to meet their obligations in full through the sale of the securities pledged behind the notes.

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<sup>3</sup>*Executive Documents, 2nd Session, 33rd Cong., Vol. VIII, Document 82, pp. 194-6.*

<sup>4</sup>The most important of the illegal banks was that of George Smith, The Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company which, in 1851, had currency outstanding amounting to \$1,470,000. Andreas, A. T., *History of Chicago*, I, p. 539.



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In contrast to this the downstate banks, operating at the time of the Secession, found their collateral practically worthless. Had the Chicago banks continued to operate until the Civil War their record would have been much less perfect.

It was not until the Panic of 1873 that Chicago was to get a genuine touch of bank failures. Between September 27, 1873, and the end of 1878, ten national banks and thirteen state banks closed their doors. Among the national banks four went into voluntary liquidation with no loss to depositors, while six were liquidated by receivers. Two of the banks put into hands of the receivers paid their depositors in full. The remaining four failed to meet the claims of creditors by \$1,864,258.<sup>5</sup> The losses to depositors of national banks during the period amounted to about seven per cent of national bank deposits before the collapse, a fair record in view of the severity of the crisis and depression.

The state banks, in contrast to the national banks which were hard hit in the panic period, managed to protect themselves temporarily by requiring notice of withdrawal on all savings deposits. This staved off trouble to a large extent until the effects of the panic wore off and pressure of withdrawals was relaxed.<sup>6</sup> As a result, general failures among the state banks did not develop until near the end of the depression. Between the time of the outbreak of the panic in 1873 and the end of 1876, six state banks failed with total deposits of about one and one-half million dollars. This amounted to about ten per cent of the state bank deposits of the city.<sup>7</sup> The most important suspension among state banks came in 1877. Between August 29 and the end of the year, seven of the largest savings banks of Chicago were closed, tying up ninety per cent of all the city's savings deposits and

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<sup>5</sup>*Annual Report of the Comptroller of the Currency*, 1890, Vol. I, pp. 178-183; 192-205.

<sup>6</sup>*Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 12, 1873.

<sup>7</sup>*Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 20, 21, 1873; January 23, 1874. *Bankers Magazine*, January, 1873, p. 581. *Daily Inter Ocean*, January 1, 1875; January 27, 1877.



about forty per cent of all deposits of the state banks.<sup>8</sup> At the time of closing, the deposits of these banks amounted to \$5,476,000 of which over \$3,000,000 was forever lost.<sup>9</sup> When we add to this the losses suffered by depositors in state banks between 1873 and the Savings Bank Panic of 1877, amounting to about \$500,000, the total losses to depositors from state bank failures during the depression starting in 1873 were approximately \$3,500,000. The net losses to depositors in state banks amounted to a little over twenty-eight per cent of all deposits as of 1871 (the last date before 1873 for which data for state bank deposits are available) compared to losses of about seven per cent of all deposits in national banks.

The underlying cause of the numerous and serious banking failures in Chicago during the period was of course the depression. But to stop with such an explanation throws little light on the more immediate specific causes which contributed to the disaster. An unraveling of the somewhat tangled mass of events and facts will illuminate the situation considerably.

The national banks, carrying as they did a substantial amount of country bank balances, were embarrassed by heavy withdrawals by the country banks when the panic started in 1873, and several, six to be exact, suspended. Although suspended, they did not fail in the accepted sense of the word. Four reopened while two voluntarily liquidated without loss to depositors. Later, between 1875 and 1878, six failed and their affairs were placed in the hands of receivers for liquidation. In the case of one, failure appears to have been due to defalcations by officers and fraudulent management. In the remainder the causes as-

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<sup>8</sup>*Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 16, 25; October 20, 30; December 8, 1877.

<sup>9</sup>*Superior Court of Cook County*, Illinois, Files No. 69069, 69496 (Master's Report), 69534 (Final Receiver's Report), 68633 (Master's Report). *Circuit Court of Cook County*, Illinois, Files No. 25993 (Receiver's Report), 25831 (Receiver's Report). *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 30, 1877.



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signed by the Comptroller of the Currency were injudicious banking and depreciation of securities. The relative smallness of the losses to the creditors of national banks indicates a management in those trying times superior to that of the state banks.

The most profound causes of the spectacular collapse of state chartered banks during the depression are to be found in the ease with which charters could be obtained and the complete lack of any form of supervision or regulation by state or any other authority. In a way this time represented *laissez faire* in banking at its worst. In respect to ease of obtaining charters it should be noted that before 1870 anyone with sufficient influence in the state legislature could get a special charter entitling him to open a bank.<sup>10</sup> Numerous charters were thus obtained and a plethora of new banks appeared during the prosperous years preceding the Panic of 1873. Between the time of the Fire of 1871 and the Panic of 1873, there were organized nine new state banks, for the most part in the savings field.

The collapse of the boom was in a way beneficial to the savings banks for instead of investing current savings in real estate people turned to the savings banks. In contrast with the deposits of the national banks, which were somewhat less in 1877 than in 1871, those of the state banks were larger by one and one-half million dollars. Even so the effect of too many savings banks for the available business was appearing in the form of competition for deposits by the payment of high rates of interest. Six per cent interest compounded semi-annually was the common rate on savings while some

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<sup>10</sup>This practice ceased with the adoption of the new Constitution of 1870, which prohibited the issue of special charters by the legislature. As a result of the absence of any general incorporation law governing the organization of banking corporations until 1887, no new banking charters were obtainable from 1870 to 1887. However, an act passed March 26, 1872, facilitated the use of the numerous issued but unused bank charters by providing for the change of name, place of business, amount of capital, number of directors and consolidation of incorporated companies. This enabled any would-be banker to purchase a charter, amend it to suit his needs and start in business wherever desired. *Laws of Illinois, 1871-2*, pp. 487-90.



banks offered more. Some of the banks were outstripped in the race and collapsed prior to 1877. However, reduction in numbers was not as great among the state banks as among the national with the result that excessive competition remained among the state banks until after the failures of 1877. In the face of the high interest rates paid to savings depositors, sound readily-saleable securities such as government, state, or municipal bonds were yielding between four per cent and five and one-half per cent. The rates on short time loans in Chicago varied from four per cent to eight per cent. To find profitable outlet for funds the banks were compelled to make or renew speculative real estate loans, which commonly had yields of from eight per cent to ten per cent, on land whose value had been declining since 1873. Thus only by good fortune could many of the savings banks maintain themselves and any panic among depositors was certain to precipitate a crisis. Over forty-five per cent of the assets of the seven banks which failed were invested in real estate or real estate loans. Had these banks been able to stave off trouble until the upturn in real estate values which became pronounced in 1879 the catastrophe might have been averted.<sup>11</sup> In addition to lending freely on real estate the failing banks lent large amounts at high rates of interest on worthless collateral to individuals speculating in land and construction enterprises.

Not only did the excessive number of state banks contribute to the weakness of the situation but also the complete lack of supervision permitted them in some instances to organize with insufficient and fictitious capital. For example, the Citizens Bank of Chicago which failed in 1875 had

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<sup>11</sup>Only four banks in Chicago carrying a substantial amount of savings accounts in 1877 weathered the storm. These were the Union Trust Company, The Illinois Trust and Savings Bank, The Dime Savings Bank and the Hibernian Banking Association. All were conservatively managed and had less than one-third of their loans secured by real estate.



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a capital fund consisting of \$16,125 in cash actually paid in and \$34,750 in stockholders notes.<sup>12</sup> The Real Estate Loan and Trust Company which failed in 1873 had actually paid in capital of \$46,000 of a supposed \$100,000.<sup>13</sup> The failure of the Fidelity Savings Bank disclosed the fact that less than \$100,000 in capital had been actually paid in while the published statements showed capital of \$200,000 and surplus of \$100,000. The surplus had been created by reappraisal of land owned by the bank at \$100,000 above the cost price when land values were actually falling. To make matters worse this same bank had invested about \$300,000, or three times its actual paid in capital, in safety deposit vaults and bank buildings.<sup>14</sup> The inadequacy of the real capital of this bank is indicated by the fact that it amounted to only seven per cent of the bank's deposits at the time of closing.

Still another factor contributing to the collapse of the savings banks in 1877 was dishonest management. In two cases, that of the State Savings Institution and that of the Merchants, Farmers and Mechanics Bank, officers in charge appear to have made heavy loans to themselves in such a manner as to indicate bad faith.<sup>15</sup>

No failures of incorporated banks in Chicago appear after 1878 until the uncertain times of the decade beginning in 1890. The collapse of banks during the period from 1873 to 1878 wiped out the weak and unsound banks and the remainder were able to weather any difficulties that arose before 1890. The decade beginning 1890 brought with it sporadic bank failures. In the first year one national bank and four private banks failed.<sup>16</sup> In 1892 one private bank failed, to be followed in 1893 by the closing of two national,

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<sup>12</sup>As reported by the Receiver *Circuit Court of Cook County, Ill.*, File No. 18280.

<sup>13</sup>*Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 10, 1877.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, September 25, 1877.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, September 22, October 20, 1877.

<sup>16</sup>*Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 1, 1891.



one state and four private banks.<sup>17</sup> Then there were no more failures until 1896. During that and the following year two national banks, three state banks and one private bank closed.<sup>18</sup> So far as available evidence indicates, the most frequent cause of failures during this period was excessive and unwarranted loans by the banks to officers and directors or to enterprises in which they were involved. The fact that depression in business often accompanied the failure and forced the misuse of funds into evidence does not justify the inclusion of poor business conditions as the cause of failure. The bulk of the Chicago banks weathered the bad years successfully.

One of the banks, the Central Trust and Savings Bank, failed as a result of the combination of business depression and lack of capital. There appears to have been no charge of fraud against the management except at the time of organization of the bank. It was organized for the purpose of taking over the doubtful assets of the Western Trust and Savings Bank and the private banking firm of Paulson and Sparri. In order to obtain the \$200,000 in cash needed to exhibit to the representative of the Auditor of Public Accounts as evidence of capital stock fully paid, the resourceful organizer resorted to a scheme later used by the officers of the ill-fated La Salle Street Trust and Savings Bank, that of borrowing the required amount. The necessary sum was obtained from the Atlas National Bank and promptly returned after the departure of the Auditor's examiner. The bank was started with little or no cash capital and assets consisting largely of uncollectable claims. Another of the state banks which failed had become involved in legal difficulties over alleged usurious practices and a receiver was

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, August 2, 1893, January 1, 1894; *Chicago Daily News Almanac and Year Book*, 1921, Notable Bank Failures in Chicago. *Inter Ocean*, July 19, 1897.

<sup>18</sup>*The Chicago Record*, July 11, 1900; *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 1, 11, 1897; December 3, 1901; December 19, 1905; *Chicago Daily News*, December 17, 1901. *Chicago Economist*, January 2, 9, 1897. *Chicago Chronicle*, February 8, 1898; *Bankers Magazine*, 1897, p. 121. Pamphlet, *Report of Special Committee Appointed to investigate the failure of the Globe Savings Bank*.



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appointed. Still another failed when its depositors became frightened on hearing of the difficulties involving the Atlas National Bank with which the state bank was tied by interlocking directors.

Another series of bank failures appeared in the years 1905 and 1906, when eight banks failed. One was a national bank, four were state banks, and three were private banks. Two small private banks failed early in 1905, to be followed in December of that year by the spectacular Walsh failure which involved one national and two state banks, all under the personal domination of John R. Walsh.<sup>19</sup> About the same time the Bank of America closed. In August, 1906, the Milwaukee Avenue State Bank closed with savings deposits of over \$4,000,000. This was followed by the failure of another private bank.<sup>20</sup>

The Walsh failures resulted in no loss to depositors since the Chicago Clearing House Association took over for liquidation the failed bank assets and assumed the liabilities, thus practically guaranteeing their deposits. This involved the advancing of over \$14,000,000 by the Clearing House banks. Ultimately, after about twenty years' time in liquidating the assets of the Walsh bank, the losses to the Clearing House banks were reduced to \$3,698,000.<sup>21</sup> The action on the part of the Clearing House banks was obviously an emergency measure designed to prevent such a loss of confidence as would endanger the whole Chicago banking structure. It was a means of self-preservation only and not intended to be taken as a precedent in handling the affairs of defunct banks affiliated with the Clearing House.

The causes of the failures of the five incorporated banks closely resemble the common causes during the failures of

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<sup>19</sup>These banks were the Chicago National Bank, The Equitable Trust Company and the Home Savings Bank.

<sup>20</sup>*Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 18, 19, 21, 1905; November 21, 1907. *Chicago Daily News*, December 18, 20, 1905; March 3, 1906; December 14, 16, 1907.

<sup>21</sup>*Chicago Daily News*, June 5, 6, 1906. Huston, F. M., *Financing an Empire*, I, pp. 330-1.



the 90's. The Walsh banks were heavily loaded down with securities of railroads and other concerns in which Walsh himself was deeply involved. Moreover, he borrowed excessive sums of money on so-called memorandum notes. It was estimated by the receiver that in 1904 Walsh and his enterprises were indebted to the Chicago National Bank by an amount equal to nearly three and one-half times the bank's capital stock.<sup>22</sup> This situation was made possible by two facts: first, Walsh controlled the affairs of his three banks single-handed. Second, he failed to confine his activities to banking but allowed himself to become so involved in railroad, quarry and mining businesses that resort to the banks for aid in time of stress became inevitable.

The failure of the Bank of America followed close after the Walsh failures. The bank was small and there were no losses to depositors. The cause of its difficulties was lack of capital. As in the case of the Central Trust and Savings Bank, which failed in 1896, a temporary loan of cash was used to make a good showing at the start. Further, there was evidence of excessive loans to officers of the bank.<sup>23</sup> The failure of the Milwaukee Avenue State Bank appears to have been due to outright embezzlement of large sums.<sup>24</sup>

A period of about eight years elapsed before Chicago experienced additional failures. In 1910 the La Salle Street National Bank was organized under the control of William Lorimer and Charles B. Munday. During the first year of its existence, while it was serving the required probationary period before full membership could be had in the Chicago Clearing House Association, the bank was so badly managed that at the end of the year membership was denied. The

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<sup>22</sup>*Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 21, 1907.

<sup>23</sup>*Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 16, 1906; April 5, 1907.

<sup>24</sup>*Inter Ocean*, August 23, 1906; *Chicago Examiner*, August 7, 1906; *Chicago Daily News*, August 20, November 6, 1906.



position of the Clearing House Committee was that the bank had been lending too heavily and without adequate security to enterprises in which Lorimer and Munday were interested.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore pressure from the Comptroller of the Currency for improvement of the bank's condition became so insistent that the national charter was given up and a state charter obtained for the La Salle Street Trust and Savings Bank, which took over the affairs of the old national bank. This occurred in 1912. In December, 1913, three feeders for the La Salle Street Trust and Savings Bank were established in the form of the Ashland-Twelfth Street Bank, the Broadway State Bank and the State Bank of Calumet. Early in the year 1914 three more subsidiaries were set up, making six in all at the time of the collapse on June 12 of that year. The failure of the La Salle Street Trust and Savings Bank and its subsidiaries revealed the situation which so frequently accompanies bank failures. First, when organized, their actual capital was considerably less than the amount supposed to have been paid in. At the time of the transfer of the business of the old national bank to the new La Salle Street Trust and Savings Bank, the nominal capital of the old and new banks was \$1,250,000. Actually the capital was impaired more than \$700,000.<sup>26</sup> The capital stock of the six subsidiaries was offered for sale to the public but the bulk of it was taken by the principal stockholders in the parent bank, Lorimer and Munday. Their subscriptions were paid for by the simple expedient of giving their notes to the La Salle Street Trust and Savings Bank, the proceeds of which were credited to the capital account of the newly formed subsidiary.<sup>27</sup> In the case of the first three, cash was temporarily borrowed and brought in until the Auditor's certificate authorizing commencement

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<sup>25</sup>*The Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 20, 1914; *Biennial Report of the Attorney General of Illinois* (1916), p. 32; *Chicago Banker*, April 1, 1916.

<sup>26</sup>*Chicago Economist*, April 21, 1917; April 8, 1922.

<sup>27</sup>*Biennial Report of the Attorney General*, 1916, *op. cit.*



of business was received. At the time of the transfer of the parent bank from a national to a state charter there arose again the problem of satisfying the legal requirements regarding capital stock. The law provided that the Auditor of Public Accounts or some person appointed by him should make a thorough examination into the affairs of such association and if satisfied that the authorized capital had been paid in and that the association had the full amount dedicated to the business, he should issue a certificate authorizing the commencement of business.<sup>28</sup> Strangely enough, it appears that the manner in which the auditor's representative was accustomed to satisfy himself regarding the existence of the full amount of paid-in capital was to *count* the *cash* in the vaults of the organizing bank. In the case of the La Salle Street Trust and Savings Bank, it appeared that all parties concerned were aware of the fact that the old La Salle Street National Bank did not have sufficient cash (\$1,250,000) on hand to enable the Auditor's representative to perform the usual money-counting rite. Hence, it was agreed that the formality would be satisfied by the expedient of borrowing \$1,250,000 in cash from the Central Trust Company in order that it might be *counted*. It was immediately returned to the lender. Subsequent to the failure of the La Salle Street Trust and Savings Bank, this Good Samaritan rôle, played innocently enough, it appears, by the Central Trust Company, returned to plague it in protracted litigation.<sup>29</sup> The second factor in the failure of this bank and its subsidiary was the excessive loans made to the insiders and their private enterprises. As almost always happens, one-man bank control made this possible.

The next failures among Chicago banks occurred in 1917 and 1918. Two small state banks and three private banks

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<sup>28</sup>Section 5, *Banking Law of the State of Illinois*.

<sup>29</sup>*Chicago Economist*, *op. cit.*; *Golden v. Cervenka*, 278 Illinois 409.



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closed in 1917. The two state banks were controlled by individuals operating an insurance company and engaging in real estate business. The funds of the banks were lent in excessive amounts to the officers and without proper security.<sup>30</sup> Early in 1918 another small state bank was closed by the Auditor and put into the hands of a receiver for liquidation. Again the cause assigned for failure was the lending of large sums without security to the president.<sup>31</sup>

The failure of the Michigan Avenue Trust Company on July 21, 1921, was the city's most spectacular failure since that of the La Salle Street Trust and Savings Bank. The cause of failure was excessive lending to oil companies and automobile body concerns in which the bank's president was interested.<sup>32</sup> The failure of this bank, which was not a member of the Clearing House Association and hence not subject to examination and supervision by the Clearing House examiner, served to focus attention upon the insufficiency of the state examinations at that time. The result was a strong campaign started by the Chicago and Cook County Bankers' Association to persuade the out-of-loop banks to affiliate with the Clearing House Association and submit to an examination which was considered more thorough and effective than that of the state. Because of this, thirty outlying banks joined the Association during the last six months of 1921.<sup>33</sup>

The close of the year 1921 found the Ft. Dearborn National and the Ft. Dearborn Trust and Savings Bank in such condition that they were forced to liquidate. Examination by the Clearing House examiner on November 19 to 30 disclosed the fact that the capital of both banks had been con-

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<sup>30</sup>*Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 1, 9, 1917. *Chicago Banker*, April 6, 1918.

<sup>31</sup>*Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 9, 1918; *Chicago Banker*, February 2, 9; March 16, 1918.

<sup>32</sup>*Chicago Banker*, July 23, 1921; *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 22, 1921; *Chicago Journal of Commerce*, July 22, 1921.

<sup>33</sup>*Chicago Journal of Commerce*, January 3, 1922.



siderably impaired.<sup>34</sup> James B. Forgan, Chairman of the Clearing House Association, issued a statement that the difficulties of the Ft. Dearborn banks were due to the troubles of Edward Tilden and Company and to bad loans which had resulted in heavy losses.<sup>35</sup> For the second time in Chicago history, the Clearing House Association came to the aid of a failing bank and guaranteed deposits. This time the Association did not carry on the liquidation, however, but the Continental and Commercial Banks purchased the good will of the Ft. Dearborn banks for \$1,250,000 and undertook to assume all the deposit liabilities and to liquidate the banks under a guarantee of \$2,500,000 from the Clearing House Association and one of \$1,500,000 posted by some of the stronger stockholders of the failing banks. Contrary to the situation in the case of the Walsh banks, the Clearing House Association was not called upon to pay any of the guarantee, and by 1925, after all claims had been met, there had been paid to stockholders dividends amounting to \$140 per share.<sup>36</sup> Since the Ft. Dearborn banks were absorbed by the Continental and Commercial banks and were not liquidated by a receiver, their affairs received little publicity, hence it is difficult to judge the true cause of their embarrassment. The information available indicates that here again the dominant owners were at least partly responsible, through bad loans made to them by the banks. The depression period also contributed to the cause. Edward Tilden and Company, major stockholder and heaviest borrower, and William Tilden, president and brother of Edward Tilden, were engaged in a security and corporation financing business which suffered great losses and failed during the slump.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup>*Chicago Journal of Commerce*, January 3, 1922; *Chicago Examiner*, January 7, 1922.

<sup>35</sup>*Chicago Banker*, July 30, 1921.

<sup>36</sup>*Chicago Banker*, January 7, 1922; January 13, 1923; September 19, 1925.

<sup>37</sup>*Chicago Economist*, January 7, 1922.



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Between April, 1922 and February, 1924, seven small state banks failed. In the case of three of these defalcation by some officer was given as the cause of failure. The other four failures were blamed upon weak loans and bad investment policies.<sup>38</sup>

The failure of outlying banks brought a continuation of pressure on them to affiliate with the Clearing House, and by June 1, 1925, there were one-hundred twenty banks located outside the loop who were either regular or affiliated members of the Chicago Clearing House Association.

In examining the causes of bank failures in Chicago before 1925 it is both convenient and useful to divide the time into two periods, one before 1890 and the other after 1890. Reasons for such a division can be found in the fact that from 1877 until 1890 there was a long interval with no failures, and conditions governing the state banks had been materially changed after 1887-9 by the introduction of state regulation under the banking acts of those years. Further, the causes of bank failures in the second period appear to be somewhat different from those of the first.

If we disregard the closing of the Chicago Branch of the Second State Bank of Illinois in 1842, we may assume that Chicago's bank failures began in 1873. Between the time of the Panic of 1873 and the end of 1877 Chicago went through its first real banking troubles. The causes of these failures were tied up with the prolonged depression. Over-expansion in numbers of banks during the boom years preceding the Panic made a collapse almost inevitable. Excessive competition for deposits led to speculative lending on real estate and construction projects, particularly by the state banks, which were completely free from state regula-

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<sup>38</sup>*Chicago Journal of Commerce*, January 8; March 20, 21, 28, 1923; *Chicago Banker*, November 11, 1923; *New York Times*, March 13, 21, 1923, February 12, 1924.



tion. Moreover, inadequate capital and dishonest management were contributing factors in some cases.

In summarizing the cause of bank failures in Chicago between 1890 and 1925, it is interesting to note that no failure was due directly to business and financial depression, so frequently the cause of failures in other localities. Of the thirty incorporated banks which we have considered, twenty-one failed largely or in part because of heavy lending to enterprises in which their officers were interested, or directly to officers for speculative purposes. Sometimes this took the form of unloading unmarketable securities on them, as was the case with several chain banks. This group of twenty-one banks includes all of the important bank failures during this period. One bank was drawn into failure by its affiliation with this group. Seven of the thirty banks failed because of embezzlement and fraud. In the case of six banks, the capital stock had not been fully paid in at the time of organization, but cash had been borrowed temporarily from other banks in order to make the proper exhibit to the Auditor's examiner. In only four cases does the blame appear to have rested on poor, inefficient management and weak loans. Seven were subsidiary banks which failed when the parent bank drained them of cash in return for depreciated and unsaleable securities. Indirectly in a few cases, the failure might be said to be due to general business conditions in so far as the business ventures of the officers failed to prosper. However, we cannot put the blame entirely on poor business conditions when the conservatively managed banks were not hit at the same time.



## NINETY-EIGHT YEARS AGO IN BLOOMINGTON

In the month of September, 1837, Oliver Ellsworth left his home in Berlin, Connecticut, and started for Bloomington, Illinois, where his brother Charles had settled during the previous year. Soon after his arrival he wrote the following letter to a brother and sister whom he had left behind. The letter gives an excellent account of Bloomington, then six years old, and contains many references to conditions in Illinois nearly a century ago. It is reprinted here from the Bloomington *Pantagraph* of August 19, 1909.  
—Editor.

Bloomington, McLean County,  
Oct. 19, 1837.

Dear Brother and Sister:—I take my seat this morn-  
to let you know that I am still on the habitable globe  
and am still well. I had a very long journey to Illinois,  
being three weeks and one day on the road. I went to  
Pittsburg, but the Ohio was so low that I did not  
think it best to venture a passage down. I therefore,  
took stage to Cleveland and arrived there about 4  
o'clock in the afternoon. E. Wetmore's sign was imme-  
diately opposite where I stopped. I brushed up my old  
clothes, washed and shaved, and made a call on him  
forthwith. I found him just recovering from a billious  
attack which confined him for two weeks. We soon  
went to see Mr. Stringer and met them at the door, and  
were I to judge from appearances they were glad to see  
me. Mr. W., drank tea, and I spent the night very  
pleasantly there. They had a thousand and one ques-  
tions to ask and some of them I could not [answer] for  
the reason that I could not.

I left Cleveland the next day about 9 o'clock. Mr.



W. wished me to when I wrote to E. Windsor to remember him to all the cousins and to tell Lemuel that he designed writing him a letter soon. Mr. and Mrs. Stringer sent a great deal of love to you all, etc. But you have heard from them direct a dozen times ere this I presume. We had a good time on the way; we landed at Toledo, a place at the mouth of the Maumee river. But if you are curious to know my travels thru, I will refer you to a letter I wrote home last week. You will undoubtedly see that, and so it will be unnecessary for me to repeat.

Suffice it to say that I arrived here safe last week, Tuesday. As I approached the shop I saw two heads thrust out at the door, gazing, I thought, rather earnestly. They soon, however, disappeared. I then saw another head at the door on the side of the building nearest me. This person stood cross-legged and his arms carelessly folded and one hand put up to his face or nose. I took this person to be no other than Charles Ellsworth, and on approaching I found I was not vastly mistaken. He looks, for all the world, the same as he used to and appears like the same old thing. He enjoys good health and has thru the summer. I don't think him as fleshy as he was while in Connecticut, but with the exception of three or four days he has been well. He is working for a Mr. Barber from the state of New York, who is a fine man and has been here just a year. He boards, and his family, and Charles himself, says they are about right. Mrs. Barber, he thinks, is about it, so if he is pleased it is not necessary for us to feel alarmed about his situation.

While I have been here I have been in the same family, and I can say that they are good livers, not only for the western country, but they would be considered good anywhere.

Lydia, while I was on the road I inquired occasionally for Janesville, in Wisconsin. It is situated, I believe, on Rock river about two miles from the line of this state. I did not meet with but one person who had been there, and he said it was about two miles across



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the line. He described it as a fine region of country, etc., but new, of course. Have you heard from the honorable gentleman as yet, and when does he come on to Connecticut? You will give me particulars, for I feel interested in all such matters you know. I wish you were coming to Bloomington if you came to the west, for I believe you would like it. But perhaps it is no better here than there.

This is good and if that is as good it is good enough. One advantage here that Wisconsin cannot yet have—this is an older place, and the population is becoming somewhat settled. The pioneers here are selling and are thus giving way to a more civilized race of inhabitants. Janesville, from this place, is distant probably 200 miles, but that is not much in this western country. Now, let me give you and John a history of this place.

Bloomington is forty miles east of the Illinois river and Pekin is the nearest river town. That is the place where merchants have their goods shipped to; it is forty miles to Pekin; Peoria is ten miles above Pekin on the opposite side of the river. It is forty-five miles from here to Peoria. The Illinois river is navigable for steamboats to Peoria and seventy-five miles beyond the year around. The river is not wide, but it is very deep and straight, which makes navigation good. St. Louis is 200 miles from Peoria, a passage on board the boat of one and one-half days from Peoria. There is a boat leaving for St. Louis always every day. There is a railroad the state is now having surveyed from Pekin to this place, and one-half of the road is being advertised as being ready to receive proposals for grading this winter. Thus you see when this road is completed Bloomington will be within three hours of the Illinois river.

Bloomington is the county seat of McLean county, a county as good, perhaps, as any in the state. It is about as large as Wirttington village, that is, this village is about as large as that village. There are now six or eight stores, three physicians, and lawyers are without number. There are two churches, a Presbyterian and a



Methodist. There are also quite a respectable society of Baptists, who have just had a protracted meeting here. I forgot to say, while I was speaking about this being the county seat, that they had a good court house already erected of brick. The buildings in this place are generally frame, but a few log houses are to be found about here. There is an academy here for which the last summer has had one hundred scholars, and will probably have more, as the place is improving. The fund raised from the sale of lands given by the state is nearly sufficient to support the institution.

There is also a good library here of 400 volumes, a thing not common in the west. In short, I consider this place, for all it has not been standing for five or six years, as a place of any note, about as old as Berlin. It has all the privilege that Berlin has for all that I can see, and I do not feel as if a settler here from the east gives up anything in coming here. I did not expect to find an apple in Illinois, or at least in this part of it, as I came down the Illinois river I bought five or six, thinking it might be the last I should have for a long time.

When I got within one mile of Bloomington, I saw a man gathering apples. Of course, I was surprised. He had a heap of sixty or seventy bushel and I asked him if they were for sale. He said they were and I told him I wanted some to eat and he gave me as many as I wanted. He said he asked for winter fruit, 75 cents a bushel, a price but little above what they are in Berlin this season. There was one cider mill just in operation last season here, and there will be several in a short time without doubt. I saw some as fine peach orchards here as I ever saw in my life. There were no peaches here this year, however, but the year before there was an abundance.

I will remark one thing about the apples — that they are the best I ever saw; there are no defective ones at all. I heard a farmer say he never saw a wormy apple here in his life, and I have eaten a good many and have seen nothing of the kind. No knots or nothing of the



kind on them, but they are truly speaking, as fair as an apple. Charles had a peck or so laid up for me when I came, and they went well, I can assure you. Whether it is grafted fruit they have here or not, I cannot say, but one thing is certain I have seen no poor apples. Mr. Barber says that from the time of strawberries in the latter part of last May up to the present, they have had sufficient green fruit to make pies out of. Plums grow here in abundance. Charles says they are first rate. Game is plenty here, wild turkeys in the woods and prairie hens on the prairies. A boy, day before yesterday, went out with his gun and was gone from two to three hours and got as many as he could carry. I do not tell of this as anything singular for it was thought nothing of here. I mention it because I happened to see the boy go out and saw him come in.

Bloomington is the handsomest thing I have seen in this state by all means. It is the handsomest country around it I have seen and I am pleased with it in every respect as well as any place I have seen. The water is what may be called good, it is hard, will not wash well, but to drink it is good; and it is a healthy place at any rate. It has the name all thru where I traveled of being perfectly healthy. The people look healthy, there is no fever and ague nor bilious complaints at all here now, and this is the time for them if they come at all.

I feel as clear from them here, perhaps, as I could in Connecticut. The rivers, all of them in the west, are more or less unhealthy. They will in time, however, become as healthy as they are in the east. But now for a person to come in and settle on them he would be apt to take the ague and other complaints which it is the cause of.

Well, now, John, I suppose you will think I have been very minute in my description of this place, and of course you think it probable I take a particular interest in it, which all, I readily confess, and for the reason that Charles and myself design making it a permanent home. We have bargained for a lot of land



lying east of this village two miles, containing 210 acres. It has only a frame house 18x20 feet and a log or plank one which is nearly as large. There is a small building besides on it, no barn at all on it. There is also about ten acres under improvement. We have agreed to 1,150 dollars for the place, \$250 of it to be paid in cabinet furniture out of the Barber shop, and Mr. Barber gives Charles work to work it out. We paid \$500 down in cash and our note to him for \$400 on the first of September, 1838. We gave him a mortgage on the property to secure him. We paid about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  dollars an acre for it, but you cannot get land in this state at the government price. The place is considered cheap by those about here. Mr. Barber told us it was cheap at \$1260 and he did not think we could get it for less. We have only ten acres of it in timber, which is but little I know, but then we can buy more. Timber is worth here \$20 an acre, and we are in hopes of being able to buy ten acres more, which I think will answer very well.

The improvements on the place are worth here, everybody says, from \$250 to \$300, and then taking the timber which will sell for \$20 per acre, it reduces the prairie 200 acres to \$3 per acre, which I consider very low. I feel as if we, considering the place, have made a good bargain. Yet I do not feel like cracking it up to any one. Let everyone judge for themselves.

Now, John, I tell what Charles and I want to have you do. We want to have you come out here and go in with us on the place. Charles says he knows you would like the country, and I think you would, too. The soil is as black as your hat and as mellow as a ash heap. There is not a stone to be found on the whole farm nor is there for miles around. In fact, brick takes the place for building wells, etc.

If you, John, will come on, we can live like pigs in the clover; we can raise whatever we please. One man, they say will tend 25 acres of corn, which will produce its 50 bushels to the acre on an average, which is worth from  $37\frac{1}{2}$  to 50 cents a bushel. Wheat is worth \$1;



oats 25 cents and potatoes 25c, all of which find a ready market. As for instance, pork is worth from \$4 to \$5 per 100 weight, and you can also go into the raising of stock, which can get their living all except four months in the year, on the prairie, and for the hay to feed these four months, you can have just what you are of a mind to cut by cutting it. And beef cattle are worth about what they used to be in Connecticut, so you see they are very profitable. In a few years we can become well off in the world. Now what do you say, will you come on? Charles says he has been trying to have you come this long time and he is giving you up, but I do not feel like that. I know that were you once here you would not take a farm in Vernon as a gift, and be obliged to live on it. If you come on Charles says that he shall be willing on his part, to let you, if you desire it, come in and own a share in our other property, which is a lot in Ottawa, that has some to be paid on it yet, and two in the town of Ford that are paid for, and a farm lot of 80 acres in the county of Henry, which last, I presume, is worth an acre as we paid for this. On that there is 40 acres of timber, and if you are of a mind to come on I shall have no objection to this plan if you wish it. I hope you have not bought yet, as I think you can do altogether better here. If you come we shall be able to pay up for this spring and then what improvements are made will be our own. I am very anxious you should come. Our cabinet furniture Charles can make, so it will cost us next to nothing for that, and we can fix our place ourselves without paying out but little, so that it will be quite comfortable.

There is one thing more, if you come on, that will be wanting, and that is a wife. I hope you will feel as if you were willing to enter into bonds matrimonial without any delay, as a wife in the west is very necessary. I think you are the best situated to get married of any of us; you have the most money at your disposal, and you are in a region where girls of respectability are to be obtained much easier than here. There



## NINETY-EIGHT YEARS AGO IN BLOOMINGTON

are some fine-ladies in this town, I understand, but they are generally obtained with more difficulty than in the east. If you will come on we wish to have you write as soon as you have given the subject a fair consideration, and let us know.

Don't be afraid, and remember that in a short time you will have as many friends in this western valley as you will have left in Connecticut. It will cost you, if you come on, from 50 to 60 dollars, taking the best style of traveling, and of course, if you come in the spring of the year you will want a good conveyance. I should take the best. I should go to Philadelphia and if it is in the month of March you will take stage to Pittsburg. Then you will find the Ohio river open and you will take passage from there to St. Louis, which will be from \$20 to \$30, as the opposition may range. From St. Louis to Pekin it will be \$6. I presume you can come on for \$50, and if there should happen to be two of you, you will be able to have a large heft of baggage brought with you.

Stock, such as good working oxen, are worth from \$60 to \$80. We ought to have two yoke and a horse in the breaking of new land. Cows are worth from \$15 to \$25 and \$20 will get good ones. I should think that \$350 will put that farm for stock and utensils, so that we could get along tolerably well. You will like this country well, John, it is not the state of New York you come to, if you come here. I do not want to hire you to come out, but I should not be afraid to obligate myself to pay the expense of coming if you do not like it. We wish you to write immediately on receipt of this, what you will do, because if you do come on we shall get some rails out and if you do not come on we shall let it lay and do nothing with it next season. In your answer just say definitely, if you come on, about getting married, because if you conclude to come on but not to get married at any rate, why then we must do some t'other way, but I hope you will go the figure at once, as it will be the best way, I think.

I had a paper from home on last Monday's mail. I



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expected a letter, but was disappointed. We shall look for one in the next mail, which comes from the east next Sunday. We have mails come here from all directions. I think I shall leave here next week to find business for the winter. You will direct my letters to Bloomington, and if I am not here they will be forwarded to me. I want you should say to our folks that they should be saving all kinds of seeds for us and be particular and get some English cherry stones, a pint of them, I should like, for I have seen none in this country and they would sell. I think you will say this letter is long enough. I never put more than two-thirds as much in a letter before in my life. There are from 20 to 30 wagons pass here every day for the west on the Black Hawk purchase beyond the Mississippi. You have no idea of the rush of emigration even now in these dull times. We have had only one solitary frost here as yet and that was last week; the weather is now warm and pleasant. There have been some tremendous rains in some parts of the state, so much as to render the roads impassable, and in some instances stop the mails. I was very fortunate in coming on; from the time I left Connecticut until I got into this state, I did not see a single drop of rain. Since I have been here there has been a good deal.

I will just say that watermelons grow here, Charles says, the finest he ever saw, so you may save some of these seeds. Charles says there is enough written and I believe it, for there are about 210 lines on this sheet. Do likewise. Charles says you must write back immediately so we can get an answer by the middle of December without fail. COME OUT WEST — WILL YOU?

Yours,  
OLIVER.

P. S. — The people here appear to be very friendly to one another. There are some few from Connecticut, but more from the state of New York. There is a Mr. Strong here who says he built Mr. Tudor's dam and



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he came to Uncle John's for cider at the time. He told me he should go to Connecticut next season, he thought, on a visit. He came from Bolton and says he would not go back there for the whole town of Bolton. But enough. Charles has not got that letter from you yet. Remember, in much esteem, to uncle and cousins.

Yours truly,

OLIVER ELLSWORTH.



## HISTORICAL NOTE

### THE QUADROON GIRL OF SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

In the historical research regarding the removal of the Cherokee Indians to Oklahoma in 1838 and their halt east and west of Jonesboro because of the frozen Mississippi, many traditional stories have been secured, happy and sad, grave and gay, quaint and interesting. But none is more filled with tragedy, romance, heartache and a woman's devotion than the tale of Priscilla, a quadroon girl-slave of the Cherokee, who finally lived a long and peaceful life near Mulkeytown in Franklin County, Illinois.

Basil Silkwood, a sturdy pioneer, came to Illinois in the early days from Pennsylvania. He traveled west through the Carolinas and saw many features of the institution of slavery, particularly the separation of families, which were so abhorrent and repulsive to him that his heart went out to the innocent actors in this strange trade. He settled in the prairies of Franklin County on the Old Goshen road.

Priscilla, who was so soon to come into his life and live in his home, could tell nothing of her father and mother, but her earliest recollection was of herself with other pickaninnies among the cabins playing the games of early childhood. There were pickaninnies of various hues, herself very light-complexioned, with black hair which fell away in curls. But who cared how many pickaninnies there were while there was a market and a standing price for them? Nobody cared if pickaninnies "des' trouted." Priscilla, however, had a kind master and was loved by all. She remained with him until she was probably nine years of age,



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when one day there was sadness and mourning on the Carolina plantation, for the kind master was dead and his estate was being auctioned off on the block. There were hurried goodbyes as this parcel of property took their places on the auction block. And as she stood under scrutinizing eyes with her wealth of curls and smiles, she clutched a handful of hollyhock seed of a dwarf variety, which had a small very red bloom and had been a great comfort and pleasure to her in the home she was now forever leaving. These she held in her apron pocket. They were her treasure from her childhood home. The mechanical voice of the auctioneer rang clear as the price on Priscilla rose steadily from many bidders until at last a wealthy Cherokee Indian so far outbid his competitors that the word "sold" was heard and she stepped from the block the property of a red man, who at once started with her to his Smoky Mountain home in western North Carolina.

Here she was transplanted among people whose lives and ways were strange and whom she could not understand, yet she made the best of it all and in her mountain home yard she planted the hollyhock seed and her heart was glad when she again saw the small red blooms. In a few short years, however, another tragedy seemed to befall her, yet it was really a great personal blessing.

The United States had advised the Cherokee that they were to be forcibly removed beyond the Mississippi, and indeed the soldiers under Winfield Scott were abroad in the land rounding up the Indians into a stockade on the Hiawassee River; they were allowed to take no property other than their slaves. So we find Priscilla in the stockade with her treasure, a handful of the hollyhock seed.

We will not attempt to follow her over "the trail of tears" until the Indians have arrived in Illinois and have been halted west of Jonesboro on Dutch Creek. Here, in bleak



winter, in improvised quarters, misery and death were rampant.

Basil Silkwood had traveled westward and settled himself among men opposed to slavery. Indeed, through the Illinois country, ran the far-famed "underground railway" for the benefit of runaway slaves. Silkwood was of rugged type, fearless in defense of his principles, and one of those men who have made this country one to be proud of; yet he was firm in his belief that the owners should be paid for their slaves.

Jonesboro was a branch land office near a great steam-boat landing on the Mississippi River and a place to which settlers from points inland went to trade and to start their produce down the river to New Orleans; therefore we find Silkwood standing in front of the old Willard store one afternoon in late December, 1838. He was dressed as a pioneer — large silk hat, satin vest, shop-made boots and ponderous watch chain. He had finished his trading and started to the Davie Hotel across the street, when he noticed a little girl pass him several times who seemed to recognize him. He smiled at her, whereupon she came nearer saying, "Oh, you don't know me, but I remember you; I remember you visiting my first master, when he lived far over the mountains, and I wish so much I was back there now. My first master was kind to me, but he died and I am now the slave of one of the Indians in the big camp; it is so cold and miserable there, and they tell me awful stories of the white man stealing me and selling me down the river. You are white man — tell me, are they all bad men?"

One can well imagine the electrical effect of this statement, coming as it did from a lonely heart. He asked her but one question: "Who is your master now?" and on being told that he could find him in the big camp on Dutch Creek, Basil Silkwood arranged that the little girl be taken care of at the Davie Hotel, hired a livery wagon and started



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for the camp which he reached within an hour. Here he at once saw the misery and desolation of the poor Indians and their terrible plight, also the great dissatisfaction among them in the fact that their slaves were being enticed to run away and no doubt being captured by unscrupulous men who resold them in Missouri or other slave territory. Such a story was related by the Indian master of Priscilla who feared such a fate had befallen her. But, Basil Silkwood was not a man of deceit, and looking the Indian squarely in the eye, he told him the truth, and asked him the price he had on the quadroon girl. A bargain was made whereby the Indian received \$1000.00 in gold, and the lonely little girl was not bought but freed and took her place in the Silkwood home in Franklin County along with sixteen orphans to whom Silkwood had been foster father.

The Silkwood homestead may be seen today as of yore, just north of Mulkeytown. The writer has talked with Mrs. McGlasson who was raised in this home. She remembers the lovely character of Priscilla, the cleancut life, her excellent qualities as a nurse and her devotion to the last to her church and Basil Silkwood, with whom she lived until his death. Then, at her request, she lived in the home of Isom Harrison nearby. (This Isom Harrison was a member of the constitutional convention in 1818 and was a veteran of the Revolutionary War.)

When she arrived at her new home and freedom her apron pocket still held the precious hollyhock seed and today, in summer, the yard at the Silkwood home is ablaze with the small red blooms planted first by her hands. Priscilla lived to be threescore and ten and in the Silkwood lot, in Reed Cemetery nearby, is her grave. We believe that on or nearby this little mound on which the grasses have been growing for forty years should be sown the seed of the hollyhock with the little red blooms.

Makanda, Illinois

J. G. Mulcaster



## HISTORICAL NEWS

This year the ancient city of Sainte Genevieve, the oldest permanent settlement in Missouri, celebrates its two hundredth anniversary. Few communities in the Mississippi Valley have a more colorful history; perhaps none north of New Orleans retains so many visual reminders of the past.

Sainte Genevieve has figured prominently in the works of many writers, but no connected account of its history has heretofore been available. But with the publication, in connection with the bicentennial, of *Sainte Genevieve: The Story of Missouri's Oldest Settlement*, by Father Francis J. Yealy of the English Department of St. Louis University, the gap has been filled.

Father Yealy's story is comprehensive enough to satisfy most students, and brief enough to attract the general reader. It is written with grace and urbanity, and illustrated with numerous photographs. By reason of the close connection between the American Bottom and the Missouri settlement, students of Illinois history will find much of interest in its pages.

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Founded in 1835 under the name of Little Fort, the city of Waukegan has just completed its first century. One entire week — from June 27 to July 4 — was set aside for an appropriate celebration. Opening with a parade and music festival, for seven days there were homecomings, special church services, band concerts, expositions, games, fireworks, and three showings of a centennial pageant. The *Waukegan News-Sun* signalized the centennial by publishing a special



## HISTORICAL NEWS

edition of ninety-two pages, containing among other features detailed histories of Waukegan and Lake County by Jack A. Morrow, and many excellent historical photographs.

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A unique feature of the centennial of Deerfield, Lake County — celebrated on June 28-30 — was the preparation and publication of an excellent historical map. The map shows Deerfield, which was then called Cadwell Corners, as it appeared in the year 1845, ten years after the first settlers staked their claims and built their cabins. On the margin are paragraphs relating to Dr. John Albert Kennicott, the town's first physician, and John Kinzie Clark, Deerfield's most picturesque character.

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Four days of celebration — July 18, 19, 20, and 21 — marked the centennial of Fulton, Illinois. The celebration included fireworks, a spelling bee, athletic contests, a quilt exhibit, band concerts, a pageant, and a number of community meetings at which addresses were delivered by present and former residents. The *Fulton Journal* made its issue of July 5 a Centennial Historical Edition, devoted principally to well-written and well-illustrated articles on the history of Fulton and Whiteside County.

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Speeches, games, a centennial parade, band concerts and picnics marked the celebration of one hundred years of corporate history in Tremont, Tazewell County, on August 1.

In 1835 the state legislature appointed a committee to locate permanently the county seat of Tazewell County, which had been established at Mackinaw when the county was created in 1827. John H. Harris donated twenty acres of land, the people of Tremont raised \$2,000 for a county building, and the committee chose Tremont as the county seat. Here the court house remained until 1849, when it was



removed to Pekin. During the years when Tremont was the county seat many famous Illinoisans, including Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas, were more or less regular visitors.

Tremont takes its name from three mounds which border the village.

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A feature of the Marseilles Centennial, held on August 31 and September 1 and 2, was the presentation of a pageant entitled "One Hundred Years of Marseilles." Outstanding events in Marseilles and its vicinity — the arrival of the French explorers, the coming of the first white settlers, the beginning of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, and other similar episodes — were depicted in fifteen scenes. Several hundred people took part in the pageant, which was directed by Wayne Demmon.

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Four hundred people from fourteen communities took part in the Pope County historical pageant, presented at Golconda on August 16. Scenes from the history of the United States, Illinois and Pope County were re-enacted. The pageant was directed by Mrs. Gusta Wellington, Mrs. Helen C. Baker, Prof. D. R. Hartwell and Mrs. Carrie K. Duncan. Music was furnished by the Golconda Community High School band.

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Perhaps the most enduring feature of Peru's centennial (noted in the July Journal) will be the history of the city which has been compiled and published by an historical committee of ten citizens. In fifty-three double-column pages the committee presents a comprehensive picture of the development of Peru from the time the first settler arrived until 1935. Of especial interest are the photographs,



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nearly a hundred in number, by which several decades of Peru's history are illustrated.

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On July 22, 1935, the First Presbyterian Church of Mt. Sterling celebrated its one hundredth anniversary. Organized by the Rev. Cyrus L. Watson on July 12, 1835, two years after the founding of Mt. Sterling, the First Presbyterian Church has served continuously as a center of religious life and influence. In the Mt. Sterling *Democrat-Message* for July 24, 1935, appeared a history of the church, by Miss Helen Dunlap.

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Pioneer Day, the second day of the annual Carthage Homecoming (August 14th to 18th) was marked by a number of exercises emphasizing the history of Carthage and Hancock County. The recent erection of a state historical marker directing the way to the old jail where Joseph and Hyrum Smith, Mormon Prophet and Patriarch, were killed, was made the occasion for a program of Mormon history. Elder Page of the Reorganized Church of Latter Day Saints at Nauvoo gave a brief history of Mormonism in Hancock County. Mr. George S. Romney of Chicago, president of the Northern States Missions, Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints, extended greetings from that body. Paul M. Angle, Secretary of the Illinois State Historical Society, described the state's activities in marking places of historical interest. A mixed quartette sang Mormon hymns.

Later in the day the Hancock County Historical Society held a meeting in the Presbyterian Church at which Leon Berry presented his own reminiscences of Carthage history.

Throughout the Homecoming a number of Lane K. Newberry's portraits of historic places in Illinois were on exhibit.

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On June 26, 1935, the Mascoutah *Herald* celebrated its fiftieth anniversary by issuing a special edition. "To record



some bit of fact in black and white that would perhaps be filed away for future record" was the purpose of the publication — a purpose admirably fulfilled by histories of the township, the Mascoutah schools, the *Herald* itself, and many articles and pictures of historical interest.

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On June 28, 1935, the Harrisburg *Daily Register* observed its twentieth birthday by publishing a Twentieth Anniversary Edition. While stressing the developments of the last two decades, a number of articles relating to the earlier history of Harrisburg have been included. The special edition is profusely illustrated, and the cuts appear to advantage on the special newsprint which the publisher has used.

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Histories of large cities are becoming common enough, but it is seldom that one finds an entire book devoted to a community which numbers 120 persons. But such is *The Story of a Little Town*, by Harry L. Wilkey. Paloma, Adams County, Illinois, is the subject.

Mr. Wilkey's little volume traces the history of Paloma and Honey Creek Township from the days of French exploration to the year 1934. Much of a passing America is recorded in its pages.

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The McLean County Historical Society, at its annual meeting on June 6, 1935, elected the following officers: President, Wayne C. Townley; Vice-Presidents, Clark Stewart and Mrs. John McBarnes; Treasurer, David Davis; Secretary and Custodian, Harry Pratt. The following directors were elected: Wayne C. Townley, William Brigham, John Aldrich, J. L. Hasbrouk, Harry Read, Mrs. C. D. Munce and Lyman Fay.

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*Illinois State Parks and Memorials* is the title of an attractive publication recently issued by the Department of Public



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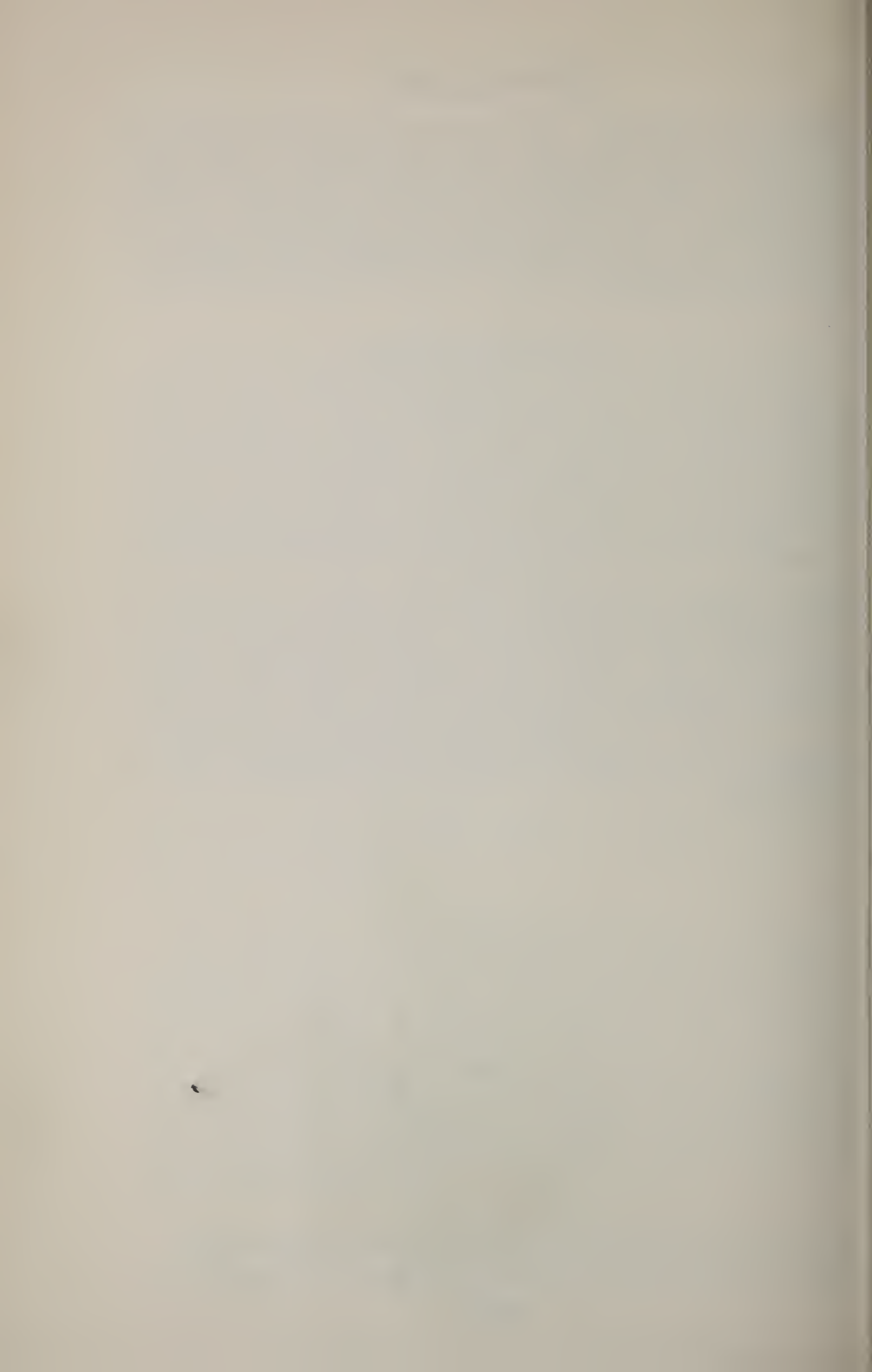
Works and Buildings. The booklet contains descriptions of the more important state parks, summaries of the backgrounds of those of historical interest, and many striking illustrations. Copies can be secured without charge by applying to the Department of Public Works and Buildings, Springfield, Illinois.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

Stanley Faye, who has undertaken to solve the long-disputed question of the Foxes' fort in this number of the Journal, resides in Aurora, Illinois. He will be remembered for his article entitled "Jolliet Goes West," in the Journal for April, 1934. For several years he has been engaged in research in Hispanic-American and French-American history. A long manuscript of his on a subject in the former field is now being translated in Venezuela preparatory to publication there. Miss Lydia Colby, of Geneseo, Illinois, has been a frequent contributor to the Society's publications. R. G. Thomas, who writes of bank failures in Chicago, is a member of the faculty of History and Economics at Purdue University.







## OTTO LEOPOLD SCHMIDT: 1863-1935

*By*

*THEODORE C. PEASE*

The Illinois State Historical Society mourns the loss of its President, Doctor Otto Leopold Schmidt; and every member privileged to know Doctor Schmidt mourns the loss of a very dear friend. The person deputed to seek after words that may set forth how much his fellow members prized Doctor Schmidt and how deeply they feel his loss may record facts unknown to some of them; he can scarcely add to the sentiments they universally hold.

Otto Leopold Schmidt was born into a war-ridden Chicago to a soldier father March 21, 1863. In the choice of his parents the Doctor gave the first of many proofs of his perspicacity. His mother, christened Therese Weikard, lived in an age when custom prescribed women self-effacement; but those who knew her bear witness that in every way she was a mate worthy of her husband. His father, Ernst Schmidt, had been born in Ebern in Bavaria March 2, 1830. He had studied at the Latin school at Bamberg, at the gymnasium at Nuremberg, and in the universities of Würzburg, Zurich, Heidelberg, and Munich. He had emerged not only a first rate physician worthy in later years to be the colleague of Virchow at Würzburg, but also a deep classical scholar, a writer, a poet, and something of a painter. Like his son, of towering height and impressive appearance, he was a leader among the young men of his day. He plunged into the 1848 struggle for liberty; for his youth he was pardoned after its collapse. It was evident however that the brilliant young doctor's liberalism would



be a hindrance to his career in the Germany of the fifties and accordingly, after spending six months in London to learn the English language, he came to Chicago in 1857. Among Chicago Germans he achieved the leadership that necessarily follows on intelligence, knowledge, humanity, courage and high moral principles. In his adopted land he became an ardent opponent of slavery, spoke at the John Brown memorial meeting in Chicago, and worked for the nomination and election of Lincoln. Until incapacitated he served as surgeon of the Third Missouri Volunteers. Always a humanitarian, always a champion of the oppressed, he abandoned the Republican party when he found that party was falling into the hands of the seekers of privilege and of selfish politicians and editors. In 1879 he ran as Socialist candidate for Mayor of Chicago, polling a quarter of the votes cast and insuring the election of the elder Carter Harrison. He was active in organizing the defense of the anarchists of the Haymarket Riot. As one of Chicago's prominent physicians he rounded out an honored life dying August 26, 1900. He left four sons, Frederick M., an apothecary, Dr. Louis E., a nationally known surgeon and specialist, Richard E., an eminent Chicago architect, and Otto L., the immediate subject of our study. No one could associate with Dr. Otto Schmidt without feeling his father's memory and influence were very fresh and very near to his daily life. By his special request the Pilgrims' Chorus from Tannhäuser was played at his funeral as it had been at his father's.

The Chicago of Otto Schmidt's childhood was the overgrown frontier trading post that disappeared in the Great Fire of 1871. The last of the log bastions of Fort Dearborn had been torn down five years before his birth. His birthplace on Clark Street near Polk, his childhood home on Edina Place, now Plymouth Court, the first schools he attended were all on the southern edge of the Loop of



today. The Chicago of his young manhood was the picturesque and vehemently individualist Chicago that has in our own day been standardized and regimented to the conventional. It was a Chicago of great churches, saintly preachers, mighty heresiarchs, and intensely vicious sinners. It was a Chicago which could command great scholars to teach in her high schools, in which gourmets with epicurean skill combined the rarest vintages of Europe with the teeming game of the frontier into feasts of Lucullus. It was a Chicago of business men who had taken the loss of their all in the Chicago fire without flinching or repining, of business men playing the game of business without scruple, a Chicago of lurid anarchist plots and counter plots. It was a Chicago in which the colorful peasants of Europe had not yet taken on the drab hues of conventional success. And in the days of the boyhood of the future physician it was a Chicago in which eminent surgeons still sharpened their operating knives on the soles of their shoes, or wrote tomes to demonstrate the fallacy of the germ theory of disease.

Through all this raging individualism of a city then at least as cosmopolitan as the vast ant hill of the evening of his life the young Otto Schmidt passed with quick and humorous appreciation and sympathy, storing his memory with a wealth of picturesque incidents. It formed his personality as his father's example had formed his character.

His formal education began in the Jones and Haven Schools in Chicago and was continued in the old Central High School. In 1880 he entered Chicago Medical College, which has since become the Medical School of Northwestern University, from which he graduated with the degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1883. From 1883 to 1885 he served internships in Alexian Brothers Hospital, and in the Cook County Infirmary at Dunning. Then he sought further training in the medical schools of Germany and



Austria. He studied for a time in Vienna; studied also at the University of Würzburg where he lived pleasantly among his father's kinsmen. In the last days of his life his mind reverted to long excursions on foot in the smiling countryside of a Germany as yet unmarried by the World War.

Returning to Chicago in 1887 he became a member of the staff of Alexian Brothers Hospital, maintaining his connection with it to his death. He was for many years a consulting physician at Michael Reese Hospital. His father had served in both before him. He was also consulting physician at the Grant and at one time chairman of the medical advisory committee of the Oak Forest institutions. From 1889 to 1892 he was instructor in the Chicago Medical College, resigning on account of the demands of his private practice. In his hospital service he was always modest and retiring but to those acquainted with developments it was evident that his advice and influence were behind very much of the great improvement in Chicago hospitals of the last half century. His brother Mr. Richard Schmidt was especially interested in the subject of hospital design and the brothers coöperated with great benefit to Chicago hospital architecture.

As a medical specialist he never lost the intellectual curiosity of his early years. He watched all new developments, studying assiduously the medical journals of his own country and of Europe. He became widely known as a specialist and consultant in internal medicine. In the Chicago area he was a pioneer in X-ray development. He assembled the first X-ray apparatus in Chicago, introduced other Chicago physicians to its use, and was active in the early experimental work in the field.

As a family physician he was deeply prized by many of the prominent families of Chicago. The illnesses to which



he became increasingly subject in the last fifteen years of his life necessitated his leaving much of the active practice to his associates; but his old patients insisted on retaining his services, looking to him for medical counsel and advice down to the last days that he was able to spend in his office. The habit of the good physician of making charges nominal or nil to those unable to pay was his in a superlative degree.

Great as were Doctor Schmidt's services as a physician they represented only one side of an active and fruitful life. It was natural that his father's son should have a wide sheaf of varied interests, should pursue them with physical vigor and intellectual keenness, and should thereby touch at many different points the hobbies of many different men. It was natural also that he should be thoroughly democratic in principle and in manners, and should like humanity in the individual or in the mass. Quick and intelligent, informed and interested in many subjects and pursuits, generous to a fault with his money, his services and his time, his friendships multiplied and with them, whether he would or no, came influence and leadership.

Doctor Schmidt had a genius for friendship. No one could be with him any length of time without feeling that he took a keen human interest in every person he met and immediately began to think of ways in which he could assist him. He scolded sturdy beggars but rarely sent them empty away. Loving music and the arts, he was quick to help their practitioners, and acquired an honored place among them. Painters, sculptors, musicians, pageant masters, looked to him for sympathy and help and never in vain. With his money he created work to salve the respect of those who needed it, and could do it.

His musical interests call for special mention. They began in his childhood home. His parents were ardent admirers of Richard Wagner's operas, the music of which they discussed and played in their home. Otto was trained



in musical theory and composition. At one time he played the zither, abandoning it for the flute. One of the intimate friends of his manhood was Mrs. Schmidt's teacher, Bernhard Ziehn, among the foremost musical scholars of America, and the trusted counsellor of Theodore Thomas. In fact, Mrs. Schmidt's skill at the piano was a never-ending source of delight for her husband.

In the days of his vigorous health Doctor Schmidt was a keen sportsman. Especially was he interested in yachting. The Sheridan Trophy of the Lake Geneva Yacht Club is inscribed with repeated victories that he won with his sloop, the *Senta*. In his later years as president of the Inland Yachting Association he toiled patiently for the sport of others, planning regattas, laying out courses, as judge tactfully laboring to settle disputes arising from protests based on the intricate rules of the sport, until once his young nephew refrained from filing a protest lest it should further harass Uncle Otto!

The activities and the services in which Doctor Schmidt was drawn by his public interests are far too numerous to detail. One or two marks of recognition among many may be noted. He received the degree of L.H.D. from Northwestern in 1922, and the L.L.D. in 1930 from Loyola. In 1933 Würzburg, his university and his father's, made him Doctor Medicinae Honoris. From Germany he received in July, 1914, the order of the Red Eagle Fourth Class; in 1925 he received the Medal of Honor of the German Red Cross; in 1928 he was honored by the Deutsches Ausland Institut. In 1923 the President of the Austrian Republic awarded him the Golden Decoration of Honor for his activity in post-war relief work.

Early in 1927 at the earnest entreaty of Mayor William E. Dever he accepted a place on the Chicago Board of Education, declining at the same time the presidency of the Board. Immediately he found himself involved in contro-





OTTO LEOPOLD SCHMIDT







versy. In view of the vital political issues of unemployment and destitution in the last few years it now seems strange that eight years ago an electorate could be profoundly excited over the charge that history texts used in American schools concealed British propaganda. Yet the charge was bruited about by people doubtless sincere, with whom it rose to fanaticism. Scholars whose sons had died as officers in the United States Army and who were thought by some colleagues to have pushed to the extreme the logical justification for the American Revolution were accused of servility to the purposes of an alien power.

In the midst of the storm let loose upon the Board of Education Doctor Schmidt struggled vainly to make people listen to reason. He labored patiently and earnestly with the assailants to endeavor to convince them they were pursuing will o' the wisps. He vainly urged the men attacked to come out with clear-cut denials that would be easily understood by the average voter. However, the mania ran its course; old friends did things they doubtless bitterly regret; foreseeing evils he was powerless to prevent Doctor Schmidt resigned from the Board after something more than a year's service.

It has been left to the last to deal with Doctor Schmidt's services in the field of history. It was a subject in which he was profoundly engrossed from the very beginning. His brother testifies that his interest in history was manifest from his earliest boyhood and was associated in his home with pictures of Lincoln and of Civil War events. He even thinks that Doctor Schmidt's delight in the sea and ships is partly ascribable to the fact that it was the sea and ships that brought the historic figures of the past to America. At all events in 1894 he joined the Chicago Historical Society, serving as a trustee from 1899 to 1935. He was active in the negotiations for the purchase by the Society of the great Gunther Collection of manuscripts and historical objects.



## OTTO LEOPOLD SCHMIDT, 1863-1935

He was President during the four crucial years of 1923-1927 when the Society was faced with the necessity of re-adjusting itself and securing a new building.

The list of his benefactions to the Chicago Historical Society would be a very long one indeed. He was continually giving or purchasing some book, document, or relic that fitted in with the Society's collections and purposes. Only his more important donations can be noted here. In 1905 as a result of his generosity the Society was able to purchase statutes of the Northwest, Indiana, and Illinois Territories, a very rare complete set. At about the same time he presented what is known as the Otto L. Schmidt Collection, a remarkable body of documents relating primarily to the conduct of the fur trade in the West from the middle of the 17th century to the early years of the 19th century with numerous rare and important signatures of the French pioneers in the western country. He also assisted and financed the researches of Dilg on the pioneer topography of the Chicago region. He encouraged Albert Scharf's painstaking surveys of the Indian village sites of the area. Between 1932 and 1934 he presented over 100 books associated with Lincoln, including books from his library and books he was known to have read. In the new building of the Chicago Historical Society in the Schmidt Pioneer Room is housed a large collection of the tools, implements, and utensils of pioneer life in great measure collected by the Doctor himself. In these he always took the greatest interest; he especially delighted in persons who could illustrate for him the precise way in which pioneer utensils were used. This room was made possible by the generosity of his family and friends. In addition Doctor Schmidt contributed generously to the costs of the building, financed various lecture series intended for members of the Society or for school children, and in numberless ways promoted its work. In the days when he was in full



health he very often dropped in at the Society on his way to work in the morning.

Doctor Schmidt's contribution to the success of the Illinois Centennial Commission was essential. That Commission published what is generally recognized as one of the outstanding state histories prepared in the United States. Its excellence was in great measure due to Doctor Schmidt's successful efforts to give the General Editor of the history, the late Professor C. W. Alvord, a free hand and adequate funds for research in going about his work. Doctor Schmidt was a member of the First Centennial Commission created by the General Assembly in 1913. Its work was impeded for some time by suits brought on constitutional issues as to the valid passage of the act creating the commission and as to the right of members of the General Assembly to be members of such a Commission. The Commission was finally re-created early in 1916 with Doctor Schmidt as Chairman. To his clear-sighted planning it was mainly due that the preparation of the Centennial History proceeded without difficulty during the interregnum between commissions. Doctor Schmidt's activities not merely in this connection but with various details of organizing the state-wide celebration of the Illinois Centennial are too numerous to mention.

Coming to matters which more immediately concern the members of the Illinois State Historical Society, Doctor Schmidt became a member of the Board of Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library in 1908. From 1923 until his death he served as President of the Board. He joined the Illinois State Historical Society on March 16, 1901, within a year or two of the Society's foundation. He was President of the Society from 1914 until his death. As early as 1913 he was a member of the Lincoln Centennial Association of Springfield and he continued a loyal and interested member to the end.



For these activities Doctor Schmidt brought his knowledge of men and his influence to bear at every turn to promote the welfare of the organizations and to enhance their usefulness. He was a continual inspiration in maintaining the high standards of scholarship that have characterized the *Illinois Historical Collections* and the other publications of Library and Society. He coöperated actively with the Department of Public Works in the creation and arrangement of state parks at points of historic interest. The story of the patience with which he labored for years to reconcile conflicting interests toward the creation of a state park at the great mound of Cahokia would require almost a separate article to relate in full. No phase of the state's history missed his careful attention and his unremitting labors for its promotion.

A friend and a helper of all persons with whom he came in contact Doctor Schmidt was especially helpful in financial and other ways to scholars in Illinois or in the surrounding states who needed help or countenance. The list of persons in the profession who owe or owed him a debt of gratitude for one sort of assistance or another would be a long one indeed. For many years President of the German-American Historical Society, he in great measure financed its publications. He was intensely interested in the cultural achievement of Americans of German descent. He wished them to take an active part in the finer aspects of American life. For that reason he furthered the gift by Mrs. Schmidt's mother of the Conrad Seipp Memorial Fund which secured the publication of Faust's *German Element in the United States*. He was a guarantor of the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, a liberal contributor to the Clarence Walworth Alvord Memorial Fund. His election as President of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association in 1927 was a spontaneous tribute of the men



interested in Valley history to the services which Doctor Schmidt had so long and unselfishly performed.

In 1891 Doctor Schmidt married Emma Seipp of Chicago. Their children, Mrs. William F. Petersen, Mrs. Hans H. Reese and Mr. Ernst Schmidt, grew up in the family home in the 3300 block on Michigan Avenue. After the war Doctor Schmidt removed to Dearborn Parkway within view of Lincoln Park, the St. Gaudens Lincoln and the present location of the Chicago Historical Society. There and at Black Point on Lake Geneva he and his family dispensed to their friends a perfect hospitality.

In the last years of the Doctor's life he went about a Chicago that for the moment had lost faith in itself, punctuated by pretentious sky scrapers without tenants, with rich men who feared and could not lead, with poor men who had lost their self-respect or who clamored that the world owed them a living. His father's son to the last, he felt keenly the futile selfishness of the rich and the unreasoning unrest of the poor and it saddened him. Yet he understood too fully the philosophy that the Renaissance artist summed up in the saying "that all things perform according to their nature," to be seriously wroth with rich or poor. As ever he honored honesty, unselfishness, and courage wherever he found them.

Ever since the war he had been subject to recurring heart attacks of an unusual sort, each one of which imposed on an active and busy man the hard penance of weeks in bed. Then he seemed to get rid of them for a time, only to be assailed about three years ago by a tumor, making its presence felt in constantly increasing pain and discomfort. In December, 1934, he underwent an operation which he hoped might give him a few months more to go about and set in order for his successors the various undertakings whose burdens he had so long carried.

However, the hope of a few months more of activity



eluded him. He was confined to his room, intermittently suffering great pain for about eight months. Successive minor operations failed to give the hoped-for relief. He lay watching the crowds of people traveling North Avenue in a warm Chicago spring and summer to and from the lake, watching the birds playing outside his window. His friends might come sometimes to take coffee with him. Near him was the little silver yacht, the gift of General Sheridan to the Lake Geneva Yacht Club; it was inscribed with his past victories in the *Senta*; it had been won once more for the year by his son. There were also pictures, maps and historical charts, the work of a little grandson in whose independent and vigorous mind he found deep satisfaction.

Then in the last days of August he began to fail rapidly; and on the 20th came the end of a life that had been filled with keen delight and with usefulness such as fall to the lot of but few men.



# OTTO LEOPOLD SCHMIDT \*

## AN APPRECIATION

*By*

*LAURENCE M. LARSON*

For a number of years—I do not know how many—it has been customary for the Illinois State Historical Society to meet in formal assembly on this date to take note of an outstanding event in American history, the admission of Illinois to the mighty union of sovereign states. Those of you who have attended these anniversary gatherings in the past will recall that almost invariably the presiding official was Doctor Otto L. Schmidt. Of course, when he was present (and I do not know that he was ever absent), the chair could be occupied by no one else; for as long ago as 1914 he was chosen president of this body, which office he held by regular and successive elections till his death on August 20 of the present year.

And now that Doctor Schmidt no longer walks among us, now that another has taken his place as leader and guide, it seems appropriate that we should take a few minutes of the time allotted to these exercises and turn our thoughts to the remarkable career that has so recently closed. There is much that can be said of our departed friend, but most of it we shall have to leave unsaid; for, on an occasion like this it is only natural that we should limit our consideration to one important chapter in his varied career and should place the emphasis on his service to the cause of history, and in particular to the history of his own state.

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\*Read before the Illinois State Historical Society at its Illinois Day Meeting in Springfield, December 3, 1935.



Otto Leopold Schmidt came from a family whose chief concern was with the ancient art of healing and the scientific study of human ailments. His father was a physician of more than local fame; a younger brother has risen to high eminence in the same profession; and it was only to be expected that young Otto should decide to travel the same road. In *Who's Who in Medicine* he modestly describes himself as a "general practitioner," which his wide knowledge of medical subjects and his penetrating insight into the erratic behavior of the human system prepared him so well to be. He was, however, not without certain specific and related interests, the cultivation of which brought him repute and recognition of a kind that is very close to that of the medical specialist. For Doctor Schmidt had developed a skill and had built up a knowledge of which his professional colleagues frequently availed themselves, especially when the problem lay in the fields of disease where human nerves are chiefly concerned.

He began the practice of medicine in 1883 and, except for a period of study in the medical schools of Europe, he continued active in his chosen profession for more than fifty years. He might have limited his career to the practice of medicine and enjoyed the satisfaction of wide renown, though perhaps no greater renown than he actually did achieve. Fame, however, was kinder to Doctor Schmidt than to most men: she gave a double portion of her engaging gift. For in any review of his career, one will have to take large account not only of the distinction that he achieved in medicine but also of the honors that came to him for long-continued labor in the vineyard of history.

Doctor Schmidt was historically minded. It may be that he was not wholly without the interest of the antiquarian who studies the past for its own sake; but this was wholly subordinate to his interest in the past as a complex of human forces that have made the present. That he should



come to an understanding of this is not at all strange. For what man among us, whose eyes are anointed to see, can fail to realize, in looking back upon the seventy and more years of Doctor Schmidt's life, that in the state of Illinois and particularly in his own city of Chicago vast and turbulent powers were unfolding their strength. One need only call attention to the fact that Chicago with perhaps 100,000 on the day of his birth had grown to a vast metropolis of more than 3,000,000 by the day of his death.

Doctor Schmidt came into the world in a season of strain and stress. The date was March 21, 1863, a time when hopes were low in many hearts, for Vicksburg had not yet been taken and the victory at Gettysburg had not yet been won. The Schmidt family, though of immigrant origin, had a personal interest in the conflict, for the father of the household served for a period at the front with a medical unit.

One can therefore be quite sure that one of the great subjects of thought and conversation in the family during the earlier years of the young boy's life was the issues and events of the great conflict. After the war came a dozen years of so-called reconstruction, when the baser political passions were active on both sides of the border. It was in this period that young Schmidt was receiving his first impressions of public life.

One may doubt that the savage realities of that tempestuous time touched his mind very deeply. Rather it seems probable that he received more positive impressions from the political warfare in his own state. The years of his youth were the classic period of Illinois politics. General Grant had marched almost directly from Appomattox to the White House. Men from Illinois sat high in the councils of the nation, men like Logan, Trumbull, Washburne, and David Davis. And over all hovered the ever-present memory of Abraham Lincoln, the living glory of the state.



## OTTO LEOPOLD SCHMIDT, 1863-1935

It is therefore not strange that the young man should develop a keen interest in political activities. This interest he maintained till the end; at times it even drew him into the field of practical politics. But, what is more important, his interest in the mighty drama that he watched unfold itself as the years marched on, drew him close to the heart of the state that was playing so great a part. The stream of history in the seventies rolled forward like a torrent, and a soul like that of young Schmidt, sensitive, receptive, and responsive, could not fail to receive a permanent stamp.

When still a young man just past thirty he became a member of the Chicago Historical Society and a connection was formed which added greatly to the strength of that organization. It was only natural that he should hold membership in the German-American Historical Society in which he held the place of leadership for twenty-five years.

He was also a member of the American Historical Association and in 1933, when the organization met in Urbana, he rendered financial assistance, though he was not able to attend its sessions. When a small group of scholars in 1913 founded an association which was to bring together and organize the devotees of history in the Mississippi Valley, Otto L. Schmidt became a charter member. Of his membership in your own organization mention has already been made.

There is not much that the historical profession can do to honor its outstanding members. Almost the only tangible reward is the formal elevation to leadership. Such honors came several times to Doctor Schmidt. In 1926 he was chosen president of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association. This election is so unusual that it calls for comment. The Association is a virile and active body: its membership is made up largely of men and women who regard historical work as their profession. Up to that year (1926) the presidency had always been given to men who had attained



eminence as students of history. But on that occasion the organization decided to ignore the claims of historical scholarship and gave the presidency to a layman. Doctor Schmidt had contributed nothing to the bibliography of history. He was a man of culture, and scientific attainment, but that had been achieved in the distant realm of medicine. To a place in the guild of workers in history he could make no claim.

In addition we must note the remarkable fact that this layman already held the presidency of four other important historical organizations, the German-American, the Chicago, and the State historical societies, and the Board of Trustees of the State Historical Library.

These honors, for they were real honors deliberately conferred, were awarded in recognition of the energy and the enthusiasm which Doctor Schmidt had displayed in the promotion of historical study in the state of Illinois. There is work to do in the vineyard which cannot always be done by men of the academic profession. This work had in some measure fallen to him, and the recognition that he received would indicate that his duties were efficiently performed.

There can be no doubt that Doctor Schmidt found real satisfaction in the honors that he was allowed to share. One can also be sure that he enjoyed the tasks that were assigned to him. He was far better informed than most laymen on historical subjects and could deal with experts without embarrassment. He served the cause most prominently on the side of administration; but this, too, is an important service.

One must take note first of all of his services as chairman of the Illinois Centennial Commission. This position he held from 1915 to 1919 when the work of that important body reached its completion. As members of the Commission he and his associates were in charge of the preparations for the celebration of the state centennial. This involved



serious work in many lines of which I shall make mention of only one.

One of the most important duties assigned to the Commission was to make the necessary plans and provisions for the writing of a history of Illinois, one that should be adequate to the dignity of a great state. The committee on publication selected a group of highly competent writers and the work was ultimately published in five volumes. The *Centennial History of Illinois* is a real achievement. It has been acclaimed throughout the land as a work which in dignity, in substance, and in literary excellence is wholly worthy of the state and deserves a place above that of any state history that had been produced up to that time.

That this high standard of excellence could be attained and kept throughout the series was due primarily to the rare wisdom and the watchful care of Professor Evarts B. Greene who presided over the committee. But one must not forget to state that on all important questions Professor Greene had the cordial support of his colleagues, notably Doctor Schmidt who as chairman of the Commission held a position somewhat more important than that of a mere member of a subordinate committee. Professor Greene recognized this and in an editorial note to the second volume of the history he writes:

"I desire finally to place on record my high appreciation of the fine public spirit shown at every stage of our work by the chairman of the Commission, Doctor Otto L. Schmidt of Chicago."

When in 1908 a vacancy appeared in the Board of Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library, Governor Deneen requested Doctor Schmidt to become a member and this position he held till the day of his death. When Professor Greene resigned his membership twelve years ago, Doctor Schmidt became president of the Board and remained in this position till the day of his death.



It is not necessary to argue that this chairmanship can be made an important function. In addition to being a library in a conventional sense, the State Historical Library is an agency to which has been entrusted the editorial preparation and publication of sources for the history of Illinois. Twenty-five volumes of such materials have now been published; nearly all of these have come from the press during Doctor Schmidt's tenure of membership in the Board.

The Illinois Historical Collections is a notable, one may even say a remarkable, series, one for which critics have had almost nothing to say but praise. Its excellence may be ascribed primarily to the high standards of editorial preparation set by its first editor, Professor C. W. Alvord, and maintained by his successor, Professor Theodore Calvin Pease. But one may safely affirm that it has not been difficult to maintain these standards, inasmuch as the Board and particularly Doctor Schmidt, has in every case given loyal support to the editorial force whenever a need for such support has seemed to appear.

Doctor Schmidt's service to the people of the state extended into every part of the commonwealth. In his capacity as president of the Illinois State Historical Society he tried to maintain a close touch with all the activities of the organization, he was ready to assist and coöperate in any undertaking that seemed to lie within the field of his official functions. Those of you who are interested in the history of your own localities will recall the enthusiastic response which always came from his office to plans and suggestions that he regarded as promising and worth while. If an official representation was desired at a local celebration, Doctor Schmidt was always willing to attend.

He gave of his time and he gave of his private means. So far as I know he was never paid for his public services. The positions that he held were such as carried no salaries. His many journeys to the capital and elsewhere in the state



on missions that had to do with historical activities were always made at his own expense.

His more direct contributions were many and the money spent in this way was often considerable in amount. In 1891 he married Miss Emma Seipp, who survives him, and who knows better than anyone else how great a loss has been suffered, first of all by his family but also by his many friends, by the historical fraternity, and by the state of Illinois, in the passing of this unusual man.

Mrs. Schmidt was the daughter of Conrad Seipp who in his day was a prominent business man in Chicago. After his death the family established the Conrad Seipp memorial prize of \$3,000 which was at one time awarded to Professor A. B. Faust for his well-known work on *The German Element in the United States*. In the establishment of this prize one seems to note the influence of Doctor Schmidt whose interest in German-American history had by this time developed into a serious concern.

More than any other group or institution the Chicago Historical Society has experienced the liberality of its departed leader. In the Society's building is the Schmidt Pioneer Room into which has been gathered a significant collection of tools and other utensils and implements that were needed and usually found in a pioneer cabin. These were purchased and given to the society by Doctor Schmidt whose interest in pioneer life was an early development which grew with the years.

More important perhaps, at least to scholars, is the Otto L. Schmidt collection which came as a gift to the same organization. This is composed of about 750 documents of an economic character and dealing chiefly with the history and the conduct of the American fur trade. On the French side some of the items go back to the seventeenth century. It will be readily understood that a collection of this sort must be of highly significant value.



The range of his benefactions was wide and his gifts were not limited to institutions or organizations. He gave assistance to scholars who had important projects of research under way. He helped to finance the publication of books. When the Mississippi Valley Historical Review was launched, he was one of its earliest guarantors. His gifts to individuals were not always large, but they were many and they were always helpful.

Doctor Schmidt was born into a cultured home. His father was a scientist whose intellectual horizon stretched far beyond the limits of his profession. The ancestral house of the family was at Ebern in the lovely hill country of northern Bavaria. It is a region filled with great memories, a country where civilization has put forth some of its choicest flowers. Less than a hundred miles away are Würzburg and Erlangen, Nürnberg and Fulda, Bayreuth and Jena and classic Weimar, all shrines of culture and noble tradition, some of them centuries old. After his graduation from Chicago Medical College, Doctor Schmidt spent some time abroad in the medical schools of Vienna and Würzburg. Those must have been glorious months, those months in Würzburg, when Otto Leopold Schmidt was young.

Doctor Schmidt believed that one owes a debt to one's ancestors and this debt he gladly paid. The honor that he rendered to his German past was more than lip service; he paid the debt in his daily life. I have heard it stated that Doctor Schmidt was the most prominent citizen of German blood in Chicago, perhaps one might say in all Illinois. In whatever his German-American friends attempted to do for their people in a large way, his aid was always enlisted and he usually shared in the undertaking.

His soul was wrenched those fateful April days eighteen years ago when the trumpet called the nation to war. But he knew what he owed to his American citizenship and he paid his debt to the last penny. He knew that the most im-



portant task that he could undertake was to mobilize the German-American citizenship in loyal bands around the flag. After the war was over he threw his abundant energies into the work for European relief. So effective were his labors in this field that he was honored with several signal awards, among them a decoration by the president of the Austrian State.

What manner of man was this who was able to serve in so many and such unrelated fields? I need not describe him to you, for you have all seen him many times. You have seen his towering form and his strong face with the firm lines. You all know his manner of speech, deliberate, precise, and never affected. Such was also the soul within, strong, determined, but never hard. He was precise and vigorous in thought but always open-minded, a man who loved to walk with choice companions but strong enough to walk alone.

For a period of twelve years I have worked with Doctor Schmidt in the Board of Trustees of the State Historical Library. I am sure that I speak also for all the others who have a direct interest in that institution when I say that a source of wisdom and strength has been closed to us. So long have we been accustomed to see him in the chair of leadership that it seems strange to be without his genial presence. As for myself, I am grateful for this opportunity to bring a last word of homage to my departed chief.



# ONE OF MR. LINCOLN'S OLD FRIENDS<sup>1</sup>

By

MOSES COIT TYLER<sup>2</sup>

One evening, during the Black Hawk War, a company of Illinois soldiers, commanded by a certain Captain A. Lincoln, lay down to sleep by the side of Rock River, at a point where an ancient upheaval of rocks across the bed of the stream forms a remarkable ford, which in dry seasons rises even to the dignity and the convenience of a bridge. On both sides of that rocky ford, since the night when Capt. Lincoln and his tired men lighted there the fires of their bivouac, has upgrown a little city, which bears the appropriate name of Rockford—endowed with an amplitude of power in its water-course equal to that of Rochester, and enveloped in a rare and fascinating adornment of forest beauty which makes it the New Haven of Illinois.

The most eminent citizen of Rockford is the Hon. Anson S. Miller, a graduate of Hamilton College, for thirty years a resident of Illinois and distinguished in the Northwest for an ability and an integrity which ought long since to

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<sup>1</sup>Reprinted from the New York *Independent*, March 12 and 19, 1868.

<sup>2</sup>Moses Coit Tyler, one of the most prominent figures in American cultural life during the last half of the nineteenth century, was just beginning his academic career at the time of the publication of this paper. Born at Griswold, Connecticut, in 1835, he graduated from Yale in 1857, studied theology there and at Andover, and entered the Congregational ministry in 1860. From 1867 to 1881 he was professor of English literature at the University of Michigan. In 1878 he published his *History of American Literature*, the first comprehensive study of the subject. From 1881 until his death in 1900 he was professor of American history at Cornell University.



have secured for him a place in the national councils.<sup>3</sup> Judge Miller was an early and intimate friend of Abraham Lincoln; he was associated with Mr. Lincoln at the bar, at political conventions, in the legislature, and in private life; and there is no other subject on which he converses with so fervent and tender an eloquence as that of the life, and character, and renown of the Martyr-President.

During a visit of several months, last year, in this New Haven of the Prairies, I was honored with the acquaintance of Judge Miller. Finding that his lips overflowed with precious reminiscences of Mr. Lincoln, I made copious memoranda of his conversations. Some portions of these memoranda with his rather reluctant consent, I propose, in this and another paper, to lay before the readers of *The Independent*.

Precious reminiscences! Abraham Lincoln is the greatest figure in American history since George Washington. Can any memorial, however slight, which in any degree adds to our knowledge of the personal qualities of such a man, be deemed trivial?

#### EARLY REPUTATION OF MR. LINCOLN

"I came to Illinois and settled in Rockford in 1838. That was a long way from Springfield; but even at that distance, and at that early day, Lincoln was a man of note, especially in the profession. He was always spoken of as Abe Lincoln; and for a long time, without knowing much about him, and without ever seeing him, I kept hearing of Abe Lincoln, Abe Lincoln. Almost always he was spoken of in connec-

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<sup>3</sup>"Anson S. Miller was a prominent lawyer and politician half a century ago. He was elected state senator in 1846, was postmaster of Rockford under appointment of President Lincoln, and probate judge from 1857 to 1865. Judge Miller was one of the presidential electors in 1864, and was chosen by the electoral college to carry the vote of Illinois to Washington. Judge Miller was one of the old-school characters, dignified, slightly pompous, with a fund of good stories which he could relate ad libitum. Judge Miller died January 7, 1891, at Santa Cruz, Cal. For twenty years preceding his death he had resided in that state." Charles A. Church, *History of Winnebago County* (Chicago, 1916), II, 661.



tion with his law-partner, the Hon. Stephen T. Logan, by far the best lawyer in the state. Logan was the father-in-law of Marshal Lamson.<sup>4</sup>

#### FIRST SIGHT OF MR. LINCOLN

"I am sure that so far back as in 1838 I used to hear of Abe Lincoln. He was always mentioned with respect, and yet with a sort of homely familiarity. He was looked upon as a good lawyer and a rising citizen; but I never saw him until several years after. It was in '44, not long after the defeat of Henry Clay, that I first saw him. It was my first term in the legislature. Lincoln was not a member, but he was an active and a prominent Whig. Shortly after my arrival in Springfield, I was summoned to a caucus of the Whig members, convened for the purpose of nominating officers for the two houses. The caucus was to be in a large room in the second story of a brick building facing the Square. As I approached the building, I saw a very tall, lank man enter the passage and go up stairs. It was cold weather. He had on a seal skin cap of the cheapest kind possible, with at least half of the fur worn off. Altogether he was poorly, shabbily dressed. I observed, also, a team with a load of wood before the door; and I supposed that the tall man with the old fur cap was the teamster, and that he was going up stairs to see about selling the wood. Entering the passage immediately after him, I followed him up stairs and into the room where the caucus was to be held. I noticed that he nodded to everybody, and I thought it queer that a woodman should be so well acquainted with the magnates of the party. Oglesby was there, and Yates, and Baker—Col. Baker, afterward senator from Oregon, a man built after the type of an old Roman senator, the peerless orator, killed at Ball's Bluff. The question before us

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<sup>4</sup>Stephen T. Logan and Abraham Lincoln were law partners from 1841 to 1844. Ward Hill Lamson was Lincoln's close friend and partner in the trial of cases in Vermilion County. As Marshal of the District of Columbia during the Civil War, by Lincoln's appointment, Lamson was well known throughout the North.



was whether we should let the election of officers go by default. Our party was overwhelmed with grief by the defeat of Harry Clay; and many of us thought that it would not be worth while at present to make any stand for party officers. But to others among us there seemed some chance of making headway by taking advantage of dissensions in the Democratic party. That party was then split into two sections: one headed by Trumbull, now in the United States Senate; the other headed by Ford. Well, in the discussion which then ensued, Baker, though not a member of the legislature, took a prominent part. Indeed, at that time he was a man far more distinguished than Lincoln. Baker thought it not best to make much opposition; he felt that in the defeat of Clay the Whig party had been annihilated. Of course, Baker made a forcible speech; and I remember that I was compelled to get up and reply to him. I said that there was no such thing as annihilation in the universe of God; that we must never say die; that we ought to wage the battle with might and main; and I concluded by nominating Stephen T. Logan for speaker. I think that immediately after I took my seat the tall man with the old fur cap rose. He advocated the same view which I had just presented; he was for thorough work; and he thought that the Whigs would hold the balance of power. I was astonished to hear a man like him speak so clearly and so exactly to the point. I remember the impression made upon me was, not that he was a brilliant man, nor a fluent one; but eminently practical and sensible. His speech was short, but weighty. Of course, I wanted to know who he was—this tall, lank champion, with the old fur cap. Why, don't you know him? That's Abe Lincoln. From that time I became familiarly acquainted with him, and kept up the acquaintance until his death."

## MR. LINCOLN'S EARLY VIEWS OF SLAVERY

Judge Miller frequently denied, and even ridiculed, the



assertion which has found some currency that in those early days Mr. Lincoln did not see, and feel, and admit the atrocious character of slavery; and that he was indebted to his last law partner for his conversion to anti-slavery views. By an incident which occurred in 1845 the Judge is sure that so far back as that year Mr. Lincoln was an avowed antagonist of slavery.

It was in the May of 1845 that Judge Miller made in the legislature a long speech against the black laws of Illinois; and in the course of that speech occurred the following passage, which I copy from a newspaper report of it: "The system of slavery has stained our history, tarnished our national character, and done more to stay the spread of free principles and to disgrace American liberty than all other causes combined. We owe nothing but abhorrence to that institution which now stands exposed before the world in naked deformity, without a screen or the least relief from the piercing light of the age, and without a redeeming feature."

In 1845, such an attack upon slavery, by a regular member of the Whig party, was anything but a common-place proceeding. The Judge remembers that Mr. Lincoln was his most attentive auditor, leaning throughout the speech against a pillar in the chamber. Moreover, Mr. Lincoln was one of the first and the warmest to greet him when the speech was over, and was particularly emphatic in his commendation of the passage which denounced slavery.

In listening to the conversation of Judge Miller, I perceived that he was, like the rest of the Illinoisians, enthusiastic in his admiration for that extraordinary group of bright and powerful men who came to Illinois thirty or forty years ago. There were giants in those days. Illinois differs from all other historic communities in this particular—its Augustan Age came at the first. Its greatest rival is the splendor of its own renown. Whoever shall finally



draw the master-portrait of Abraham Lincoln will present him in the midst of this throng of imperial men, who began life with him, who befriended him, who fought against him, whose personalities were influenced by his personality and in turn reacted upon his. There were Stephen T. Logan, pre-eminent lawyer; and Gen. Shields, with his Celtic impulsiveness, generosity, and superficiality; and McDougall, afterward senator from California, who, when sober—as he occasionally was—spoke almost as good English as Charles Sumner; and Bledsoe, the universal scholar; and Trumbull, the princely debater; and Douglas, little for a giant but full-sized for a demagogue; and Baker, the magnificent orator; and Oglesby; and Yates; and the Lovejoys, confessors and martyrs both; and Arnold, the historian; and Judd, now for the first time in Congress, but with the promise of a distinguished career before him.

From among the full-length sketches which Judge Miller gave me of the early great men of Illinois, with whom Lincoln acted, I will select but one, whose name I have not mentioned in the list just given.

#### JUDGE POPE

"I often met Mr. Lincoln, many years ago, in the United States District Court, presided over by Judge Nathaniel Pope, the father of Gen. John Pope, so renowned in the late war and since. This Judge Pope was a most remarkable man, one of the patriarchs of Illinois;<sup>5</sup> and it used to seem to me that Lincoln was an idol with him. The Judge was a strong, original character. He had a head like a half-bushel, with brain enough for six men. He was learned, but rough and gruff. He had a wonderful knowledge of

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<sup>5</sup>Nathaniel Pope was Secretary of Illinois Territory from 1809 to 1816. In 1816 he was elected territorial delegate to Congress, and in that capacity he secured the admission of Illinois to the Union in 1818. From 1819 until his death in 1850 he was judge of the United States district court for Illinois.



human nature, and was utterly without fear. Gen. Pope<sup>6</sup> has many of the father's qualities; and these qualities have made him the bold energetic soldier, and the indomitable administrator. They say that the General has a sort of genius for swearing. Well, he comes by it honestly. His father had the gift of speaking decidedly plain English, even in court. We had at the bar in those days a very elegant and accomplished gentleman—the Hon. David J. Baker—who one day in the court-room took his place near the stove, just outside the bar, and, with almost an ostentation of deference, called the attention of the court to the fact, and begged that, on account of his illness, he might be permitted to stand there during the case in which he was then engaged. The Judge heard his elaborate and rather dainty petition, and then, with the utmost gravity, and in a deep, gruff voice, replied, 'Mr. Baker, the court don't care a damn where you stand!' I have said that Judge Pope loved Lincoln. His affection for Lincoln was very marked. He would snub Logan. He didn't like Col. Baker. He was what Dr. Johnson calls a good hater. In fact, he was strong in everything—his likes and his dislikes. Lincoln was one of his likes. He told me that he thought Lincoln a very able and promising man. The Judge was rough toward everyone; but his roughness toward Lincoln had a touch of tenderness in it. He would sometimes rebuke him, but in a sort of fatherly way. I remember that once Judge Pope called a case in which Lincoln was engaged; but Lincoln did not answer. He called again; no answer. 'Where's Lincoln?' roared the Judge, in his severe fashion; 'why don't he attend to his business?' Soon Lincoln came shambling into court. 'O, Mr. Lincoln, you've come at last, have you? Well, I've been calling for you a long time.' Many persons

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<sup>6</sup>Because of his successes in the West, Pope was appointed to the command of the Army of Virginia in the summer of 1862. At the Second Battle of Bull Run he was disastrously defeated, and soon afterward was removed from command. For the balance of the war he served in the Northwest.



wondered at the favor shown to John Pope by Mr. Lincoln during the war. I understood it. Mr. Lincoln remembered John Pope's father with gratitude and reverence; he knew John Pope too. He knew that he was made of good stuff, as indeed he is. We had no better soldier than Pope. It was treachery in the rear, not the enemy in front, that defeated him. Lincoln understood the sort of roar in John Pope's proclamations which many people thought gasconade. That roar he got from his gruff old father; it was the roar of the lion and Lincoln had heard it a thousand times. It was the most natural thing in the world for Lincoln to stand up for John Pope.

#### LINCOLN AS A LAWYER

"As a lawyer, Lincoln was distinguished in real-estate business, not in criminal business. He wanted time to think. The criminal lawyer must be superior to that necessity. Lincoln hadn't the flexibility, and facile dexterity, and the intellectual unscrupulousness for the peculiar emergencies of a criminal case. Besides, he needed to be seen that he was on the right side. Now and then, when some poor man needed a defense, and couldn't pay for it, especially if there was a probability of his innocence, Lincoln would take the case; and, by sheer force of benevolent sincerity, he would make a mighty impression upon the jury. He had some capital qualities for a lawyer. We had a saying at the bar that 'when Abe Lincoln had stated a case it was more than half argued.' He was wonderfully clear, simple, logical. His mental qualities had been moulded by Euclid. He didn't read many, but much [*sic*]. He wasn't likely to be thrown off his guard by a tricky antagonist. He had wit, common sense, a natural skill in controversy. Then he had that rare gift, the gift of keeping cool. I don't know anywhere a man more difficult to encounter than he was; and this, I think, Douglas came to think—Douglas, reputed the ablest offhand debater in America. Lincoln might have



made more money; but he discouraged litigation, and often told clients that they were in the wrong, and urged them to go home and settle with their opponents without resorting to the law.

#### MR. LINCOLN IN CONVENTION

"One week before the National Convention at Chicago, in 1860, we had our state convention at Decatur. After nominating state officers and delegates to the National Convention, resolutions were passed presenting the name of Abraham Lincoln for the presidency. Lincoln himself sat on the platform in front of all the people. Presently we heard a band of music; then, amid loud shouts, a procession entered the great tent, holding aloft a white banner, supported by two oak rails, which had been split years before by Honest Abe. The banner was rudely inscribed with his name. When Lincoln saw the banner, and heard the vehement shouts of the people, he buried his face in his hands. But the procession moved on, and stood before Lincoln, and all the people called upon him for a speech. He rose to speak, but was too much agitated to say much, or to say well what he did say. But his inability to speak, under such circumstances, was itself eloquence.

#### MR. LINCOLN ON HIS OWN NOMINATION

"After the convention, I parted with Mr. Lincoln on the platform at the depot. The train was about to start for Chicago, and a great crowd of us were going up to attend the National Convention. Mr. Lincoln thrust out his long hand to me, and said, playfully:

" 'Well, the best of friends must part.'

" 'What,' said I, 'aren't you going up to Chicago?'

" 'No. You fellows have talked of me for the presidency, and I think I would look better at home.'

" 'Joking apart, Mr. Lincoln, I think so too.'

" 'Well,' he replied, 'I have never asked a man to help me



in this matter ; neither shall I. But, when you and the other friends go to the convention, if you can use my name to carry out our principles, do so, whatever position you may assign me. But, if you choose to give me no place, *you* know that I am used to working in the ranks.'

"He stopped a moment, and then continued :

" 'But, Judge, if I had the making of the President, I would make William H. Seward President.'

"And he meant it. He was the most magnanimous and self-sacrificing of men.

#### MR. LINCOLN AWAY FROM HOME

"I was in Washington three or four times during the war ; and during every visit I saw Mr. Lincoln repeatedly. The first time I was a little anxious to know how he would receive me in the midst of his greatness. I sent in my card ; but, without allowing me to wait, he came to the door himself, and said, in his old hearty way, 'Come in.' He was unspoiled by prosperity. He gave to his old friends a generous welcome, as informal as possible.

"I shall never forget an evening I spent with him at the Sailors' Home. It was in the summer of '63. He wanted to know all about a great political meeting that had then just been held at Springfield ; and he seemed greatly interested, as I told him how we had acres of wagons, and how the people came in their teams sixty miles and camped out.<sup>7</sup> But he was most anxious to know about the reception of his famous Conkling letter. I told him that the passage in the letter which was most vehemently cheered was the one about the colored men ; and I quoted it to him : 'We have promised the colored men their rights ; and, by the help of God, that promise shall be kept.' When I told him this, he

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<sup>7</sup>The great Union Mass Meeting held at Springfield, September 3, 1863. The "Conkling letter" was a masterly defense of the Emancipation Proclamation which Lincoln sent to be read at the meeting.



replied, very earnestly, 'Well, God helping me, that promise shall be fulfilled.' Soon he changed the subject by showing how much his thoughts dwelt on his old home. He said, 'How did Springfield look?' I told him. Then he said, 'Did you go down to my house?'

" 'Yes, some friends wished me to show them your house. So I took them to see it.'

" 'Well, how did it look?'

" 'Everything looked well. I think you have a good tenant.'

"He stopped, and, with a very sad, weary expression upon his face, bent forward, with his head upon his hands and his elbows supported on his knees. In that attitude he remained in silence for several minutes. I could not doubt what he was thinking of, and where his heart was. By and by he thus broke silence:

" 'Well, Judge, I don't know when I shall ever see that home again. I certainly shan't before we get through this scrape.' "

Such are some of the things I heard from an old friend of that venerated and lamented man, of whom, as Southey sang of Percival, ". . . In an hour of woe the assassin bereaved us, When his counsels most and his resolute virtue were needed."

Michigan University,

February, 1868.



## BOOKS IN THE WILDERNESS

*By*

*AUBREY STARKE*

In November, 1763, at Kaskaskia, in the Illinois Country of Louisiana, occurred one of the many pathetic and needless incidents connected with the dissolution of the Jesuit order. The Parliament of Paris, on August 6, 1762, had decreed the suppression of the order and the confiscation of its estates. Other provincial parliaments quickly followed the example set, and the superior council of Louisiana issued a decree dated July 9, 1763, expelling the Jesuits from the colony.

By the Treaty of Paris, signed February 10, 1763, France had already ceded to Great Britain Canada and all her possessions in what is now the United States, except for a small strip of land (including New Orleans) near the mouth of the Mississippi and the French territory west of the Mississippi,—all of which by separate agreement had earlier been ceded to Spain. The territory from which the Kaskaskia Jesuits were expelled was no longer French, nor thought to be. But a courier bearing the order of the council was despatched to Fort de Chartres, in the Illinois Country, and Commandant Neyon de Villiers, who remained in charge of the fort until a British officer could arrive to accept its surrender, proceeded to execute the commands of the council. On September 24th, the Jesuits of Kaskaskia were ordered from their rooms, which were promptly sealed. On November 6th, an auction was held, and their house, furniture, cattle, buildings and lands were sold. Finally, on November 24th, the Jesuits and their slaves (the



latter destined for the New Orleans market) embarked for New Orleans, from which port the Jesuit fathers later made their way to Spain. Of their common property nothing had been left to them; of their personal property only "their clothes and their books."<sup>1</sup>

That the Jesuits, who had been established in the Illinois almost three-quarters of a century, should have owned books is not surprising, and what the books were may in part be guessed: breviaries, books of devotion, sermons, copies of the *Jesuit Relations* published annually (from 1632 to 1673) by Sébastien Cramoisy, in Paris. The reference to "their books" is however important, for it is, apparently, the first plural reference to books in the Illinois Country, and therefore the first reference to anything resembling a library in the territory where the great Newberry Library, with its valuable collections pertaining to the Indians and the settlement of the West, now stands, and where the American Library Association, more than two hundred years after the departure of the Jesuits, with their little collection, established its headquarters.

That there were in 1763 other books in the Illinois, and books of a secular nature, is of course not to be doubted. There were among the Illinois French—among the civilians as well as the military—many of noble lineage, and of education. Some of them undoubtedly possessed copies of French and Latin classics, and French *romans*, for whether they came as settlers or with the army—and for only temporary residence in the wilderness—they must have felt that books, as well as playing cards (which we know they had) could furnish some antidote for the boredom a frontier community would induce.

But the first "catalogue" of a "library" in the Illinois

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<sup>1</sup>See the letter of Father Francois Philibert Watrin, reprinted in Reuben Gold Thwaites' *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* (Cleveland, Ohio, 1896-1901), LXX, 13 ff.



Country is of a religious collection, not a secular one. Father Pierre Gibault, priest in charge of the parishes of Kaskaskia and Vincennes during the unsettled and hazardous days of the American occupation, before the lasting establishment of civil government in 1790, wrote to his spiritual lord, the Bishop of Quebec, on June 6, 1786, to defend himself from accusations of his enemies. Among the few alleviations of life allowed to him in the wilderness or in the village (of Vincennes), the inhabitants of which were abandoned to "barbarism," he named reading:

. . . J'aye beaucoup de bons livres, comme Pontas, Lamet, et Fromageau, Ste. Meauve, les conferences d'Anger, la conduite des âme, la conduite des confesseurs, le dictionnaire des conciles, le dictionnaire théologique, Collet, toute l'histoire ecclésiastique, quantité de sermonnaires et beaucoup d'autres livres. . . .

Father Gibault's letter, preserved in the Archiepiscopal Archives of Quebec, was published a number of years ago by Professor Clarence W. Alvord, who, with the assistance of Dr. J. F. Jameson, identified all the books listed by Father Gibault, by title and probable edition.<sup>2</sup>

The first "catalogue" of a secular "library" in the Illinois is found in the will of one of the first English pioneers, James Moore, an Indian trader, said to have been a native of Maryland. Though he did not arrive in the Illinois until 1781, Moore became the leader of the Americans who, in the summer of 1779, following the occupation of the Illinois by George Rogers Clark, established near the present town of Waterloo, Belle Fontaine, the first American settlement north of the Ohio. What life was like in Belle Fontaine we may surmise from a court record of May 7, 1787,<sup>3</sup> concerning a quarrel that took place in the nearby American settlement of Grand Ruisseau. A dog belonging to one Jacob

<sup>2</sup>*Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library*, V, 534-47.

<sup>3</sup>Published in the *Illinois Historical Collections*, II, 289-97.



Groot bit off part of the nose of one of the bastard children of James Piggott. Groot, though informed of the injury to the child, began and finished his dinner before going to inquire about the child. Piggott, in anger, shot Groot's dog, and Groot's wife made remarks about Piggott's common-law wife, and "her bastards." That the principals involved survived to appear in court is perhaps the most remarkable feature of the case. In such a community as Belle Fontaine must have been—and at such a distance from any center of English culture—one would not have expected to find the books James Moore disposed of in his will, dated May 31, 1787.

The will, translated from English into French for purposes of record, was re-translated by Professor Alvord, who very cleverly read the English titles from the French clerk's mis-copying of a perhaps not-too-clear English hand.

I give . . . to my son, William, . . . a book called or entitled "Tragedies of Otway" and the first volume of the "Spectator"; and to my son, John, "The Young Man's Companion"; and to my son, James, the works of Abraham Cowley; and to Henock, the seventh volume of the "Spectator"; and to Milton, "The Paradise Lost" of Milton and the works of Mr. Savage entitled "The Vagabond"; and to my daughter Mary, the first volume of the works of Shakespear with an equal part of all my personal goods; and all the remaining books shall be equally divided among all. . . .<sup>4</sup>

James Moore died, insolvent, sometime between June 2, 1788 (when his property was ordered seized to satisfy his debts) and September 1, 1788, when the will was registered. What effect that little collection of English classics had, as heaven, on the frontier community of scarce a hundred people in which he lived, one cannot say. Several of his children moved to Ste. Genevieve, in Missouri, to which town most of the French of Illinois had already gone, seeking

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<sup>4</sup>*Illinois Historical Collections*, II, 517.



refuge among the Spaniards from the oppressions of the Americans. In Ste. Genevieve there was then, as for some decades later, far more culture than in the Illinois. But Enoch Moore, to whom the seventh volume of *The Spectator* was bequeathed, remained in the Illinois and became a surveyor; and a surveyor was, of necessity, a man of some education. For Enoch's copy of *The Spectator* and for the books inherited by the other children of James Moore, a middle-western library of today might well wish. These books, did they survive time as they had survived transportation across a wilderness to a rough frontier community, would be indeed rare bibliothecal treasures.

But an even more remarkable collection of books had probably before the death of James Moore been brought into the territory. These belonged to Barthélemi Tardiveau, a native of France, who had lived in Holland, an educated and cultivated man of ability who first appeared on the western scene about 1780, as a merchant in Louisville, Kentucky. Sometime between 1783 and 1787 he removed to Kaskaskia, where—as interpreter to Colonel Harmar and later as probate judge, and as a “lobbyist” before the old Continental Congress in New York—he labored earnestly to protect the rights of the French *habitants* and to secure for them confirmation of their titles to their lands.

Disgust with conditions in the Illinois Territory prompted his removal to New Madrid, on the west (or Spanish) bank of the Mississippi, where he died February 23, 1801. Between 1787 and the time of his death he had made several trips to New York, and had had ample opportunities to collect books there, if he had not collected his library earlier. But the perils of travel were great, and it is remarkable indeed to find such a collection of books as appear in the inventory of his estate, brought necessarily by stage, horseback, and Indian *piroque* into the Mississippi



valley. He owned "a Greek and Latin dictionary, 10 volumes of Greek and Latin books, an English-Spanish dictionary, a French dictionary in 2 volumes, . . . a treatise on agriculture, a Dictionary of Commerce, the works of Montesquieu in 6 volumes, Necker's works on Finance in 3 volumes, 3 volumes of the American Agriculturist, Resant's Grammar, . . . 9 French volumes" and—gem of the collection to a modern bibliophile—a copy of Dr. Johnson's English Dictionary, in two volumes quarto.<sup>5</sup>

Governor John Reynolds of Illinois, who came to Illinois in 1800 at the age of twelve, has in his autobiography something to say about the presence of books in the Illinois Territory in 1805 that must be set against the evidence of James Moore's will and the inventory of Tardiveau's estate in a bibliographical history of the territory.

At that day in Illinois [Reynolds wrote], not a man in the country, professional, or otherwise, had any collection of books that could acquire the name of a library. There were some books scattered through the country, but they were not plenty. Although my father was a reading man, and possessed a strong mind, yet as far as I recollect, he brought to the country with him no books, except the Bible. Many of the immigrants acted in the same manner as to books. . . . One exception I recollect was: that John Fulton, who settled in the vicinity of my father, brought with him Rollin's Ancient History. My father borrowed it, and I read it day and night at the times spared from labor. This was the first history I had ever seen, and it gave me a new field of mental existence. . . .

My father purchased a few books, and among them a treatise on geography. This was a good work in four volumes, and presented a tolerably good geography of the inhabited globe. In this work was also contained

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<sup>5</sup>I copy the list as given in *A History of Missouri*, by Louis Houck (Chicago, 1908), II, 144-45. The original inventory is preserved in the New Madrid Archives (Missouri Historical Society) VIII, 246. Pope's *Iliad*, in two volumes, and "ten volumes of English works" are also listed.



a sketch of astronomy, and particularly the solar system.<sup>6</sup>

Four years later Reynolds went to Knoxville, Tennessee, a town just outgrowing the frontier community stage of development, to attend a "college" there. After making "hasty strides in the Latin language," Reynolds read "Corderi, Selectæ Profanis, Englished Latin, Cæsar's Commentaries, Ovid's Metamorphoses, Virgil's Pastorals, Georgics, and Aeneid, Horace, and Cicero," and in the summer vacation following his first year at the Knoxville school he studied Euclid. "When the session of the college opened in the spring of 1810," he wrote, "I commenced the study of the sciences and literature, I studied geography and history carefully." Books read that year were Blair's *Rhetoric*, Watts' *Treatise on Logic*, Paley's *Moral Philosophy*, and a book on astronomy. By October, 1810, Reynolds had already begun the study of Blackstone.

A year or two later Reynolds returned to Illinois, one of the best educated men there. But by this time a fairly settled condition of affairs existed in the upper Mississippi Valley. Americans of education and culture were more numerous in the Illinois than they had been a quarter of a century before, when James Moore died; and on the west bank of the Mississippi, in territory that is now the state of Missouri, the old French culture flourished in the nominally Spanish towns of Ste. Genevieve, St. Louis, and New Madrid. In St. Louis, in 1808, Joseph Charless had begun publication of *The Missouri Gazette*, the first newspaper west of the Mississippi; and in May, 1814, appeared the first number of the *Illinois Herald*, the first newspaper in Illinois printed by Matthew Duncan at Kaskaskia.

In 1808 Governor Frederick Bates of Missouri had published in St. Louis a compilation of *Laws of the Territory*

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<sup>6</sup>*My Own Times*, by John Reynolds (Chicago, 1879; reprinted from the Belleville edition of 1855), 58, 59.



of *Louisiana*, a book of 312 pages, printed by Charless. In 1813 Matthew Duncan printed in Kentucky the first edition of *Illinois Territorial Laws*, but in June, 1815, a year after his removal to Kaskaskia, he published the first volume of Nathaniel Pope's *Digest of the Laws of the Territory of Illinois*.

In May, 1810, Henry Marie Brackenridge, the gifted son of the author of *Modern Chivalry*, found in St. Louis, in the home of Auguste Chouteau, "one of the largest private libraries [he] had seen." As Brackenridge had traveled extensively in the East and seen many excellent libraries there, we may be certain that Chouteau's was indeed a "fine collection," as Brackenridge called it.<sup>7</sup> It consisted chiefly of quartos and folios, of which Brackenridge named Lahontan's *New Voyages to North America* (London, 1703), Lafitau's *Moeurs des Sauvages Americains* (Paris, 1723), Hennepin's *Description de la Louisiane* (Paris, 1683), and Charlevoix's *Histoire et Description Générale de la Nouvelle France* (Paris, 1744). Brackenridge understood that the library had once belonged to the Jesuits, and had been used half a century before in their "college at Kaskaskia." At the time of Chouteau's death, in 1829, it numbered some six hundred volumes.

In Ste. Genevieve, in the house of M. Beauvais, once of Kaskaskia, in which Brackenridge as a child had learned the French language, there also were books, among them "an old copy of the custom of Paris, in two quarto volumes."<sup>8</sup> This book on French law Brackenridge used in preparing himself for the practice of law before the Missouri courts. In St. Louis Brackenridge made use of still a third library, "the fine library left [Madame Peyroux by her husband, who] was the author of several publications, chiefly geological, of considerable merit."

<sup>7</sup>*Recollections of the West*, by Henry M. Brackenridge (Philadelphia, 1868; from the original edition of 1838), 231.

<sup>8</sup>*Op. cit.*, 205.



Mr. John Francis McDermott, of the faculty of Washington University, who is making a special study of culture in early St. Louis, has gathered from wills and inventories of estates evidence of still earlier libraries in St. Louis,—a trading post founded in 1764 that had by 1799 achieved a population of only 925 (including slaves). Pierre Laclede, the founder, who died in 1778, left more than 200 volumes, probably the nucleus of the library Brackenridge found in the home of his foster son, Chouteau. A man named Hubert, who died the same year, left more than forty-five volumes, and Dr. August Condé left seventy-two volumes. Don Fernando de Leyba, the Spanish commandant, left seventy-four volumes at his death in 1780; a merchant, Dubreuil (who died in 1796) left ninety-seven volumes; Pierre Joseph Didier, curé of the parish (died 1799), left more than 260 volumes; and Gabriel Cerré, a former Kaskaskia merchant who financed George Rogers Clark's successful expedition against Vincennes, owned more than sixty-eight volumes. (His estate was inventoried in 1802.)<sup>9</sup>

Mr. McDermott estimates that there were at least forty-four families in St. Louis who owned a total of about 1,000 different titles in the forty-four years between the founding of the town and the establishment of the first printing press there. The list of their books includes works of Voltaire, Rousseau, Francis Bacon, Locke, Berkeley, Descartes, Fénelon, Petronius, Captain James Cook, Cervantes, and Fielding; books of history, travel, philosophy, law, and science; biographies, novels, dramas, volumes of poems—in English, Spanish, Italian, French and Latin. As a matter of fact, the cultural level of the people of the older towns of the upper Mississippi valley seems to have been higher during the first period of settlement than in the decades that marked the first immigration of any considerable number of

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<sup>9</sup>"The Printing Press and Culture," *American Book Collector*, VI, 13-15 (January, 1935).



Americans; though the contrast is of two races as well as of two periods.

Timothy Flint, a Massachusetts missionary, observed in 1816 that few good books were brought into the country as the people were too busy to think of literature; but in New Madrid—an early center of American settlement—Mrs. Gray, a lady of “seventy winters” in whose house Flint passed his first winter in the West, “had a considerable library.”<sup>10</sup>

In 1818 Richard Flower, the English colonizer whose descendants still live at Albion, Illinois, founded at Albion a public library, donations to which came from the Flower family and their friends in England. The library, consisting of between two and three thousand volumes, was kept in one end of a brick building that was used as a market place, and was open on Sunday afternoons. It is mentioned in several early books of travel as an institution which few expected to find in the heart of the wilderness.<sup>11</sup> Some books from this library are said to be still in the possession of members of the Flower family, in Albion.

In St. Louis a meeting was called in 1816 to organize a public library, and another meeting was called in 1819, but it was not until 1820 that a public library was organized there—with Isaac Barton as librarian.<sup>12</sup> A year earlier, however, a public library had been organized in Edwardsville, Illinois, and in November, 1819, there was published “A Complete Catalogue of All the Books Now in or Belonging to the Edwardsville Library, at Library Room, Edwardsville.” The list, which adds up to hardly more than one hundred and twenty volumes, is interesting enough

<sup>10</sup>*Recollections of the Last Ten Years . . .*, by Timothy Flint (Boston, 1826), 185, 229.

<sup>11</sup>See “Early Libraries in Illinois,” by W. T. Norton, *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* (1913), VI, 246-51.

<sup>12</sup>Houck, *op. cit.*, II, 73.



to be reproduced here as the first published catalogue of a library in the upper Mississippi Valley.

American State Papers, in 12 volumes; Adams' Defense; Burns' Poems; Blair's Lectures; Brydon's Tour; Butler's Hudibras; Beauties of History; Bartram's Travels; Belknap's American Biography; Coelebs' In Search of a Wife; Cowper's Homer, 4 volumes; Campaign in Russia; Carvel's Travels; Camilla, or a Picture of Youth; Clarke's Travels; Christian Researches in Asia; Clarkson's History; Clark's Naval History; Depom's Voyages; Domestic Encyclopedia; Ely's Journal; Elements of Criticism; Ferguson's Roman Republic; The Federalist; Guy Mannering; Gibbon's Rome,—in 4 volumes; Goldsmith's Works, 6 volumes; Grand Pre's Voyage; Gil Blas, 4 volumes; History of Carraccas; History of Chile; History of Greece; History of Charles Fifth; History of England; Hawkworth's Voyages; Humboldt's New Spain; Jefferson's Notes; Letters of Junius; Marshall's Life of Washington; McFingal, a Modern Epic Poem; Mayo's Ancient Geography and History; Modern Europe; McLeod on the Revelation; McKenzie's Voyage; Moore's Poems; McNevin's Switzerland; Ossian's Poems; Practical Education; Plutarch's Lives, Porter's Travels; Ramsey's Washington; Rob Roy; Rollin's Ancient History, with atlas, 8 volumes; Rumford's Essays; Robertson's America; Scottish Chiefs; Sterne's Works, 5 volumes; Scott's Works, 4 volumes; Salmagundi, 2 volumes; Shakespeare's Plays, 6 volumes; Spectator, 10 volumes; Tales of My Landlord; Telemachus; Warsaw; Travels of Anacharsis; Thompson's Seasons; Turnbull's Voyages; Universal Gazetteer; Vicissitudes Abroad, 6 volumes; Volney's America; Virginia Debates; Vicar of Wakefield; Views of Louisiana; Wirt's Life of Patrick Henry; Watt's Logic; Wealth of Nations; Young's Night Thoughts; Zimmerman on National Pride.<sup>13</sup>

This library list is an excellent commentary on the culti-

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<sup>13</sup>Norton, *op. cit.*



vation of the early settlers of Edwardsville. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of it is the number of new—contemporary—books, including several by Sir Walter Scott and Washington Irving.

In 1820 Thomas Essex and Charles E. Reynorth opened a book and stationery store in St. Louis. In 1821 the library of the Catholic College of St. Louis contained 8,000 volumes.<sup>14</sup> In the *Illinois Gazette*, published by James Hall at Shawneetown, Illinois, between 1819 and 1821, there is to be found a distinctly literary flavor. A book of *Poems* by William Leggett (with a quotation from Byron on the title-page), was published in Edwardsville in 1822,—“Printed by and for the author.” By this time, literature, in Illinois and in Missouri, was rapidly coming into its own.

“The Kaskaskia Social Library Association” was organized November 7, 1826, though its history is unknown. As early as 1828 an “Antiquarian and Historical Society” had been organized in Vandalia (then the capital of Illinois) with James Hall as president.<sup>15</sup> The *Illinois Monthly Magazine*, founded by Hall at Vandalia in 1830, was the first literary periodical of the state.

Three years later there was inventoried at Bloomington, Illinois, a truly remarkable library with a description of which this record may well close. The Reverend James McGeoch, a native of Washington County, New York, a graduate of the University of Edinburgh and of Princeton, came to the West full of zeal and religious fervor,—but with velvet vests, a tooth brush, a flute, mahogany furniture, silver candlesticks, brass andirons,—and an extensive library, which must have seemed as out of place in his log cabin home as his silver plated looking glass and Liverpool plates. He died in February, 1833. “His library was his principal legacy. Rich in the theology of Presbyterian di-

<sup>14</sup>Houck, *op. cit.*, II, 73.

<sup>15</sup>*Western Monthly Review* (Cincinnati, Ohio), I, 563-65 (January, 1828).



vines, full of titles which smack of Calvin and Knox, atonement, predestination, original sin—well-thumbed works of Locke and Bacon, together with Milton, Burke and Shakespeare—even *Lady of the Lake*, the *Vicar of Wakefield*—five hundred and thirty volumes—Latin, Greek, Hebrew—Webster's latest dictionary—altogether the library of a gentleman and a scholar. This library was appraised at \$434.09½ with many titles listed as low as 12½ cents. But it sold at nearly twice that amount."<sup>16</sup>

So, in the year with which began Chicago's recently celebrated century of progress, we end this presentation of evidence of the presence and love of books in a part of our country that, though visited and even inhabited by Europeans from before 1700, was largely wilderness and frontier until long after the eighteenth century was past. The evidence is not adduced to correct any imagined misconception of life on the outskirts of civilization in the early years of the United States, nor to suggest an unstudied influence on the life of the frontier communities. Frontier communities in the upper Mississippi Valley and the backwoodsmen who made up the bulk of their population were probably as wild and uncivilized as conventional descriptions of men and villages suggest. Even with an abundance of wine made from native grapes, of bread from local wheat, and with Indian lights o' love, the presence of books did not make the wilderness a paradise for the men who cleared it.

However, evidence of these few small private libraries, and first public ones, should correct prevailing notions of the frontier "type" and emphasize the presence, even among the ranks of Indian traders—which both James Moore and Barthélemi Tardiveau were—of men who did not conform to the type but who possessed that regard for books which has always been accepted as evidence of true culture.

<sup>16</sup>"An Appraisalment of the Property of the Rev. James McGeoch, 1833", by C. A. Harper; *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* (1931), XXIV, 141-160.



# PETER CARTWRIGHT AND THE CAUSE OF EDUCATION

By

HARRY E. PRATT

Peter Cartwright's name is a household word in Illinois today. He is the symbol of the pioneer preacher. None is better known or has caused more controversy. Detesting the preacher with theological school training and denouncing him in his writings, his name is on the roll of founders of more educational institutions than that of any other preacher in Illinois. A score of educational institutions are proud today to count him among their founders.

Unfortunately Cartwright in his *Autobiography* says scarcely a word about his educational activities. He violently opposed the theological education of his preachers, because he believed that the theological seminaries of his day, with their Calvinistic doctrines, so cooled evangelistic ardor that students lost their Methodist zeal. His violent opposition to Calvinistic theological education made him seem to be opposed to all education, which was the very opposite of the truth. The record of his educational activities shows that he deserves to be called, not only the Father of Methodist education in Illinois; but also the most ardent promoter of public education.

This study will mention the more important works of Cartwright in the cause of education over the period 1826-1851, when he was active. With no opportunity for schooling in Kentucky in his boyhood in the last decade of the eighteenth century, he became an informed man through



reading and two-thirds of a century of travel and contact with people on the circuit.

In 1801 when he felt called to preach, instead of hunting up a college or a theological seminary, he hunted up a horse, traveling equipment, a Bible, hymn book and a Methodist Discipline, took a text and started. As a presiding elder for fifty years he always insisted on his young preachers keeping up regular courses of study. In a review of his life work at the age of eighty, he said: "Without boasting I have given more time and money to schools and colleges than any other preacher in Illinois."

He accepted a degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1845, in recognition of fifteen years of service, from McKendree College and proudly used it. From 1828 to 1831 he was the most active founder of McKendree College, yet he wrote in his *Autobiography*: "My business was to preach, meet the classes, visit the society and the sick, and then to my books and study and I say that I am more indebted to Bishop McKendree for my little attainments in literature and divinity than to any other man on earth. And I believe that if presiding elders would do their duty by young men in this way, it would be more advantageous than all the colleges and biblical institutes in the land; for they then could learn and practice every day." When he started on the circuit in 1802, as a lad of seventeen, his presiding elder had declared the circuit the very best school or college to be found between heaven and earth.

#### POTAWATOMI STATION SCHOOL

From 1826 to 1828 the Methodist Church of the Illinois Conference conducted a mission school at Salem on the east side of the Fox River in La Salle County, Illinois. In June, 1827, Cartwright as presiding elder of the Illinois District had the superintendence of the mission. He wrote: "There are a great many difficulties to be encountered in introduc-



ing the Gospel among the poor children of the forest. These difficulties present themselves very formidably among the Potawotomi nation. They are generally suspicious of the whites. Our school at Salem remains small but the children learn very fast." Three months later he wrote: "Our school remains small (15, one-half girls) but the children are orderly, learn fast, and give attention to the worship of God."

#### GREENE COUNTY SEMINARY

At the Illinois Conference in 1827 Peter Cartwright presented the petition of certain citizens of Greene County, Illinois, for a conference seminary. A committee, of which Cartwright was a member, was appointed to secure information and report at the next conference. At the session of 1829 the Illinois Conference and the Missouri Conference each appointed a committee to act jointly, for "the establishment of a seminary of learning that shall not only vie with, but excell, any now in operation west of the Wabash River." The committee reported two sites, Lebanon in St. Clair County, Illinois, and Mt. Salubria, one mile west of the city of St. Louis. The Conference voted to accept the latter, but on Cartwright's objections the vote was reconsidered and the whole arrangement rejected.

At the Conference of 1830, held in Vincennes, it was voted to adopt Lebanon Seminary. Through Cartwright's efforts the name was changed to McKendree College and Peter Akers selected as its president. In 1834-35 he was active in securing from the Illinois legislature, charters for McKendree, Alton College (Shurtleff), Illinois College and Jonesboro College.

McKendree was closed in 1845 for lack of funds. In 1847, with five professors, it opened under the "Conference Finance Plan for support of McKendree College." The plan was for each class leader in the Conference to collect an aggregate of twenty-five cents quarterly from his class



## PETER CARTWRIGHT AND EDUCATION

and forward it to the college treasurer. Cartwright's efforts under this plan are shown in the following letter:

Sangamon Co. Ill.  
June 24, 1848.

Dear Brother Wentworth:—After toiling hard, begging and complaining long and loud to the scattered remnants of the Bloomington District, I have collected five dollars more for the support of the professors in *old* McKendree and I enclose it in this scrawl, but I confess I am heartily ashamed of the little pitiful sum, and I am determined to keep the subject before the Church, and will torment them before the time.

Yours in love and esteem.

### CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN ILLINOIS LEGISLATURE

Cartwright served two terms in the Illinois legislature, 1828-29, and 1832-33. The House Journal during his first term shows him to have been an active member in matters of legislation. He was the author of a bill concerning the distribution of school funds, and of a resolution covering the protection of seminary lands. In his second term as chairman of the standing committee on education he introduced a bill to establish a "State Seminary," which went to a second reading. In this forerunner of the state normal school Cartwright showed himself to be twenty-five years in advance of public sentiment on education.

### PLEASANT PLAINS ACADEMY

In 1834 Cartwright started on his farm at Pleasant Plains, Illinois, an academy which began with the three R's and ended with natural and moral philosophy, Latin and Greek, and promised other sciences and female accomplishments as soon as suitable teachers could be found. Common branches were taught at the rate of five dollars for five months, and board at the Cartwright homestead was avail-



able at a dollar a week if paid in advance, otherwise a dollar and a quarter. Cartwright installed his son-in-law, W. D. R. Trotter, as principal. The school opened but appears to have faded out at the end of a year.

#### EBENEZER MANUAL TRAINING SCHOOL

His own school closing, Cartwright in 1835 aided Peter Akers in setting up the Ebenezer Manual Training School on Akers' farm four miles northwest of Jacksonville. With Akers as principal and W. D. R. Trotter as teacher this school thrived for seven years. It received some support from the Methodist Missionary Society and sent out at least three Indians and some whites as missionaries to the Indians of the Northwest. "It was," wrote Dr. Joseph R. Harker, "Methodism's first theological seminary."

#### METHODIST GRAMMAR SCHOOLS

In 1836 the Illinois Conference adopted the report of the Committee on Education, of which Cartwright was chairman and Peter Akers secretary, recommending that the Conference undertake to establish a "Grammar School (or Academy) in each county or circuit throughout our Conference bounds." The first of these schools, Howard Academy, opened in Jacksonville the following year and some thirty more were founded in the next seventeen years. Most of them were absorbed into the public school system set up in 1856.

#### SPRINGFIELD CENTRE COLLEGE

The Illinois Conference, meeting at Springfield in 1835, appointed a committee of three, including Cartwright, to "enquire into the expediency and practicability of erecting a college or seminary of learning at or near Springfield." The committee in 1836 reported favorably a school to be called "Springfield Centre College." Cartwright was recommended as one of the trustees and the committee further



suggested that the Rev. Peter Cartwright be agent and the Bishop be respectfully requested to appoint him. The school plan failed for lack of local support.

#### ILLINOIS CONFERENCE FEMALE SEMINARY

In 1843 Peter Cartwright and Peter Akers were appointed as a Conference committee "to consider the possibility of establishing an Academy for the education of females." Two years later the committee recommended that a female seminary be established at Ebenezer. Cartwright, however much he favored the seminary, did not want it at Ebenezer. The conference adopted the plan for the school but postponed its location for a year, and appointed the presiding elders a committee to find the most desirable location. Cartwright was one of the presiding elders and through his efforts and those of William Thomas it was decided in 1846 to place the school in Jacksonville. Cartwright was elected president of the board of trustees and a charter was obtained incorporating the Illinois Conference Female Academy, January 16, 1847. The new school grew so rapidly that in four years it was incorporated as the Illinois Conference Female College.

During the Civil War, when the College had been sold by the sheriff for debt, Cartwright, a man then over seventy-six years of age, joined a group of men who bought back the college and presented it to the conference free of all debt, with a new charter as the Illinois Female College. Cartwright put \$1,100 into the reorganization and then resigned from the board of trustees after seventeen years of active service.

#### ILLINOIS WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

The name of Peter Cartwright headed a list of thirty names subscribed to a petition asking the General Assembly of Illinois to enact the necessary legislation to bring



Illinois Wesleyan University into being. In the special charter his name appears as a trustee and during the years from 1850 to 1871 he was on the board though he attended but one meeting. That he spoke many good words for the school on the circuit cannot be doubted.

President W. H. Wilder of Illinois Wesleyan in noting Cartwright's attitude on education said: "Tradition would warrant the belief that Dr. Cartwright was opposed to colleges and an educated ministry; but in this case as it is often, tradition is misleading. He detested shams and pedants and readily detected them; he denied that intellectual insight was a valid guaranty of moral character, and held that high intellectual illumination and culture might co-exist with ethical night. Mere book knowledge was not highly esteemed, and woe unto him who paraded it in his presence as the essence of superiority. His heart and thought were not against the schools, but in full accord with the fundamental ideas underlying all efforts to found them and to perpetuate the knowledge of letters. An ignorant opponent of education could scarcely have represented the Illinois Conference in thirteen quadrennial legislative assemblies of his church, or held the office of presiding elder for fifty consecutive years, or received in his honor the jubilee services of his entire conference, the distinctive honors awarded to no other person in history."

#### MISCELLANEOUS

Though he mentions the Sunday schools but once in his *Autobiography* he was active in their promotion and contributed to the American Sunday School Union.

Cartwright was a member of the first state historical society, organized at Vandalia in 1827 with Judge James Hall, the author, as its president. The records of the society have vanished but among its members were Governor Coles,



Governor Edwards, John Reynolds, Samuel D. Lockwood, and Chief Justice Wilson.

He was interested in and favored the establishment of the English and German Seminary at Quincy, afterward Chaddock College; Garrett Biblical Institute; the first State Normal School; and the State Agricultural College which developed into the University of Illinois. His interest and activity in the cause of grammar and higher education is all the more remarkable when we survey a statement made in a letter written, January 2, 1868, at the age of eighty-two: "I ought not to complain for I have never in 63 years lost an appointment before by the sickness of my wife."

The time and interest devoted to the cause of education is all the more remarkable in the light of these statistics of Cartwright's life in the ministry. He attended forty-six consecutive sessions of the Illinois Conference, 1825-1871; preached some 18,000 sermons in the years 1801-1869; baptized some 13,000 and received into the church some 12,000 persons.

The dozen outstanding projects in the field of education in which he had a hand should be refutation enough of the statement that he was an ignoramus who detested all education in general and schools in particular.

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This paper is indebted at many points to the splendid research of Dr. Joseph R. Harker, President of the Illinois Womans' College from 1893-1925, in preparation of his history of the college; a manuscript copy of which he has given to the library of the Illinois Conference Historical Society in the Buck Library at Illinois Wesleyan University. I also owe much to Rev. Arthur S. Chapman of Normal who has charge of the manuscripts of the Historical Society.



# AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF DR. EPHRAIM INGALS

*With a Foreword by*

*DR. GEORGE H. WEAVER*

The author of this autobiography was for many years an outstanding member of the medical profession of Chicago. After the Chicago fire of 1871, two rival medical societies developed in the city, one, the Chicago Medical Society on the west side, the other, the Chicago Society of Physicians and Surgeons on the south side. They were about equally strong and by dividing the medical profession dissipated the influence which might be exerted by one general organization. In 1878 Dr. Ephraim Ingals was president of the Chicago Medical Society and during his term of office the two societies were merged under the name of the Chicago Medical Society. Dr. Ingals became president of the new society and it is likely that the union was consummated and harmony established through the guiding influence of the genial and influential president. The present autobiography was finished in 1898. Dr. Ephraim Ingals died December 18, 1900, at the age of seventy-seven years.

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I have frequently been solicited to permit a notice of my life to appear in the various biographical collections



that have been made from time to time of some of the citizens of Chicago. A feeling of repugnance to such publicity has always deterred me from doing so. I am now led to prepare the following sketch, partly for my own diversion, during the comparative leisure of advanced life, and in part from a feeling that it may possibly be of some interest, or even value, to my children.

I was born May 26, 1823 at Abington Society, which is a part of the town of Pomfret, in Windham County, Ct. My father, Capt. Ephraim Ingals, was born in the same place September 6, 1764 and died there February 12, 1831. My mother was the daughter of Amasa Goodell, whose farm nearly adjoined that of my father. They were married April 26, 1801.

In a small but well filled cemetery but a few rods from my father's house, and which was once a part of his farm, my immediate ancestors are buried. Their ages at death indicate considerable longevity of blood. I understand that all who have the family name of Ingals in the United States are descended from Edmund Ingalls, who landed in America from England in 1628 and was the first settler of Lynn, Mass. He was killed while on his way from that place to Boston by the fall of his horse through a defective bridge. The name is spelled sometimes with one L and sometimes with two, even by members of the same family; and in one instance the husband and wife spell it differently. My father and my grandfather both spelled it Ingals and I do so in deference to my father's practice.

My parents had a family of five sons and four daughters, all of whom lived to adult life. Of these I was the youngest and at this writing, July 25, 1891, only myself and my brother, Charles Francis Ingals, six years my senior, are living. I remember my father well, but of my mother only her death which occurred April 2, 1829.



They were a plain, quiet, temperate, honest, frugal, industrious, unambitious couple; and if they have transmitted to me these qualities, for this I hold myself greatly their debtor. I once asked my sister Mary what peculiarity of the family was most marked, and she replied: "Their mediocrity." This I think is fairly descriptive of them. While none have become eminent, they hold a good average. Genl. Rufus Ingalls, of the Army, Senator John J. Ingalls of Kansas, and President Garfield, whose grandmother was an Ingalls, are the only ones who have gained even a moderate degree of fame.

My father inherited a farm of less than two hundred acres of rather sterile land, but having a salubrious situation in the midst of a pleasing landscape. Here nine children were born and from its products they were reared. Near the close of his life my father built a commodious house on this farm, in which, I alone of the children was born. After the family was broken up the farm was sold in 1833 to Mr. Thomas Smith for \$3,000. It is now—1891—still owned by the Smith family and has always been kept in good repair, for which I am thankful.

My eldest sister married Addison Fletcher of Cavendish, Vt. My brother Henry L., married Lavinia Childs of Woodstock, Ct. Lucy married Capt. Grosvenor Storrs, whose farm was but one mile from my father's. Lydia married Jonathan Colby, of Menard County, Illinois. Deborah married Dr. Richard F. Adams, now of Denver, Col. Edmund died unmarried in 1835. Charles Francis married Sarah Hawkins of Cavendish, Vt. George Addison married Mary E. Church, daughter of Thomas Church, of Chicago, and I married her sister Melissa Rachel Church, April 30, 1851. From these a number of descendants, too numerous to mention, have sprung.

In the fall of 1832 my brother Henry and his wife, with



Geo. Addison, set out with two horses and a covered wagon for Illinois. They drove to Pittsburgh and there embarking on a craft called an Ark, floated down the Ohio River to some point near Evansville, Ind., from which they made their way across country to a place on the Sangamon Bottom, twenty miles above Beardstown. The land which my brother took up and which Mr. Lincoln surveyed for him joins what is now Chandlersville. Except for two persons who left Abington a few months earlier, my brother was the first to emigrate from that place. I inherited from my father's estate about \$400. Mr. George Sharpe, a farmer of Abington, a man of perfect integrity and unusual ability, was my first guardian. I well remember the early morning of April 1, 1833, for it was then that I left the home of my childhood, with all my belongings in my hand. I took my way through the pasture at the foot of the hill on my father's farm, across the lots to the home of Capt. Grosvenor Storrs, the husband of my sister Lucy, where I was to work for my board and schooling.

I attended school the following winter in the red school house at the Four Corners. My father taught me my letters by forming them in the sand with his cane. My first attendance had been in a little unpainted school house standing twenty rods south of my father's house. I remember that here my teacher, on a warm summer day would sometimes make a couch on the floor and allow me to sleep there. For this kindness I hold her still in pleasant memory. On one occasion on the "last day of school," as it was always called, she gave me a little book as a reward for something, or perhaps to please my parents, and I carried it home with great pride, and along with it the chair that had been borrowed from my father for the teacher's use during the two or three months of summer school. This is the only scholastic prize that I ever received. Only very small children attended school in summer for all who were



large enough to do anything were obliged to work on the farms. Children did not wear shoes, except in cold weather, for economic reasons.

Pomfret was entirely an agricultural town. Until I left there at eleven years of age I had never seen a collection of houses that would shelter fifty people. Large families filled the scattered farmhouses. I cannot imagine a more peaceful existence than they enjoyed. Their customs were those of the primitive Puritans. The church, that all attended on Sabbath, regardless of the inclemency of the weather, had a high pulpit, with a sounding board over head, square pews and a gallery extending around three sides. No means were provided to heat it, but in extremely cold weather old ladies used a foot stove, so arranged that a basin of burning coals could be carried in a metallic dish which was enclosed by slats of wood on which they could place their feet.

The church fronted on a small common on one side of which were sheds to give shelter to the horses during services. It had a bell that could be heard several miles away. In front of the church was a post on which notices were placed, that was called the whipping post, but I do not know that it was ever made use of to inflict punishment. The Curfew used to be rung at nine o'clock in the evening, as a signal to cover the fire and retire. Whenever death occurred in the town the bell was tolled, a certain number of strokes if it was a male, a different number if a female, and the age then followed with a stroke for each year. When this sound was heard every one stood paralyzed with emotion akin to what we might expect were they all being summoned to the final judgment. The fear of death as then inculcated from the pulpit, filled the minds of men with fearful apprehensions. We have great reasons for thanksgiving that this is no longer possible. The pulpit seemed



then to think—as Burns wrote, “The fear of hell ’s the hangman’s whip, To haud the wretch in order.” I think death often comes as a friend, to lift the burden from weary shoulders and sad hearts.

The teaching of the schools was very rudimentary and only embraced the branches of reading, writing, spelling, geography and arithmetic. The reading books in use were compilations from the English classics, and these in many cases were committed to memory and I have little doubt, that, limited as they were, they never the less exercised considerable influence on the literary tastes of the people. There were no immigrants then in New England from any place and an adult who could not read and write would have been as great a curiosity as a gorilla.

This was before the invention of the friction match. The loss of fire on the hearth was no small misfortune, and the sacred flame of the vestal altar could hardly have been guarded with more assiduous care. As bed time approached, a block of hard wood was thoroughly ignited and then buried deep in the embers. In the morning this was “raked open” to kindle a new flame. If fire was lost a member of the family would go to some more fortunate neighbor, and borrowing a few coals, bury them in a pan of ashes and carry them home. Sometimes an older brother would prefer to make use of a flint lock musket to light the fire. Filling the pan with powder and connecting this with a line of tow to a pile of shavings he would snap the musket, the spark would ignite the powder, this would communicate its flame to the tow, and this again to the shavings. This was a less difficult method than Prometheus took to give us fire, but it was akin to it.

In the spring of 1834 business called my brother Henry from Illinois back to Abington. My brother Edmund and Francis and my sisters Lydia, Deborah and Lucy, with her



husband returned with him to Illinois. I desired to be one of the party, but as I was but eleven years old, it was thought best that I should go with my sister, Mary Fletcher to her home in Cavendish, Vermont. With her I lived three years, ostensibly at school. I did not apply myself and of course I did not learn much. Perhaps this was no misfortune. I was under no restraint and I ran at will over the hills with my playmates of the village, which doubtless had a favorable influence in developing my system, that was afterwards capable of great endurance.

In the spring of 1837 I returned to Connecticut and worked until autumn on the farm of Capt. Storrs, who having become discouraged by sickness and privations of a new country, had come back from Illinois to his old home in Abington. He hired one man and with him I worked in the fields. We had to milk ten cows night and morning. I was always in the yard before the rising sun, and I well remember the pain of being awakened for this work from the unfinished slumbers of the night. We did not finish our daily labors until after the family had partaken of their supper, and then our unvarying meal from day to day consisted of bread, milk and cheese.

In September 1837, my brother Henry again visited Abington and I returned with him to Illinois. We took a steam boat at New London, Connecticut for New York and continued our journey by the same means of conveyance up the Hudson River, thence by the Erie Canal to Buffalo, when we again took steamer for Maumee City, which was on the Maumee River about six miles above where Toledo now stands. It was not then thought that a city could be built on the present site of Toledo. Here we bought teams and drove through Ohio, Michigan and Indiana, by way of Kalamazoo, Door Prairie, now LaPorte, Joliet and Ottawa to the east end of Palestine Grove in what was then Ogle



County but is now Lee County, Illinois, and three miles west of the present town of Sublette.

I reached there in November after an extremely laborious and disagreeable journey of more than one month. Michigan, which was just beginning to be settled, was the most difficult part of the way. There was but little food for man or beast and the roads lay through many swampy places, impassable but for the corduroy bridges made by placing logs side by side on the soft mud. I never pass across the state in a vestibule train without thinking thankfully of the contrast.

I was fourteen years old the previous May. I worked for my brother Charles F. on his farm three years for seven dollars a month, and clothed myself. I did nearly a man's work. It seems a small sum but it was all my services were then worth. My brother was the first settler on the east side of Palestine Grove. He located his claim and with the assistance of my brother George A. and my sister Deborah commenced improving it in the spring of 1836, more than a year before I joined them. He had but ten acres fenced when I arrived there and I do not remember any other enclosed land nearer than the Doan Settlement, two miles west of his. The lands were not brought into the market by the Government until 1844. Until this time—and for several years after—claims were held under laws enacted and enforced by the settlers in their capacity as citizens. I have never known more wise and just laws than they enacted nor seen them enforced as cheaply and promptly. The claim associations were continued several years after the lands were legally subject to entry, because many settlers were so poor they were unable to pay \$1.25 an acre for the land they had improved. I never knew but one piece of land entered from a settler who had a just claim to it. This was done to a bar keeper in Dixon. One morning at sun-rise a wagon in which were a number of stalwart men drove up in front



of the tavern in which he was employed. They threw him over the bar and into the wagon without ceremony, and drove him into the prairie on the outskirts of the town and set him down in the presence of a court that had two hundred armed men present to enforce its decrees. Under the circumstances he was glad to make over the title of the land then and there. The fifty dollars which he had paid the government was generously and justly returned to him. No one was ever imprudent enough to suggest the question of duress as a cloud upon the title. A large number of the men were arrested for riot and tried before John Dexter, Justice of the Peace, who promptly acquitted them. I asked him, afterwards, if that was not a riot, what it was? He replied "Oh, it was only a kind of a row."

We lived in a rude cabin about fifteen feet square made of unhewd logs. It had one room on the ground, and one above, which was but two logs high on the sides and but seven feet at the ridgepole. This was reached from the lower room by a ladder. It was lighted by one window three feet square in one gable. The lower room had two such windows. The only implements used in constructing the cabin was an ax, a froe or frow, an auger and a shave. No iron was used in the building and no sawed lumber, except for the first floor, and one small door through which a man could not pass upright with his hat on. The furniture consisted of an improvised table the legs of which crossed like those of a saw horse, boards being nailed over the top. We had but two chairs. One of these had a splint bottom and the other had a board nailed across it for a seat. We made other seats by putting legs in puncheons, which were four inches thick and four feet long. These we cushioned by nailing coon skins around them. I need not say they were very uncomfortable seats. The chairs had the place of honor and were reserved for ladies and the older adults. Then a white head was rarely seen, and it was hard to find a person



of more than middle age. The joists and rafters of our house were made of small trees about six inches at the butts and, as they were green when put in, they caused the floor above to sag very much in the middle of the room. The upper floor was made of rived boards about four inches wide and four feet long laid two deep on the joists, but without nails to hold them in place. Sometimes these would become misplaced so that a leg of the bedstead would drop through, which was enough to waken even a tired boy. The roof was made with the same kind of boards, three or four deep, held in place by weight poles. This was proof against rain but snow would blow through it plentifully, some times giving an ample added covering to the bed in the morning. This house sheltered, on an average, six persons and we were also obliged to lodge travelers as we were several miles away from any public house. This was the best we could do for ourselves, but it was not comfortable, and for any but hardy young people who had faith and courage to think they could see something better before them it would have been intolerable.

Our farm implements were quite as rude as our dwelling and its furnishings. Our harrows were made entirely of wood, the plows did not scour, the hoes were heavy and dull, both cradle and scythe had a home made, straight snath with a single nib. We thrashed our grain by arranging the bundles in a circle on the ground, the heads all leaning the same way and then driving both horses and oxen against them on the circle, one person constantly tossing up the straw with a fork while another drove the animals. Until we were able to obtain a fanning mill the grain was separated from the chaff by pouring it through the wind. A common expression of excellence then was "the head of the heap." This originated from the fact that when grain was cleaned in this way the heaviest and best fell first and constituted the head of the heap.



There were no mechanics near. I have tapped my boots, using a last and pegs that we had made, and from the skirts of a worn out saddle. The first improvement on the house was made in the winter of 1838-39 by an Irish carpenter named Michael O'Keefe, who was sent out from Chicago by a Mr. Croover to work on his claim, which was two miles south of our house. He knew nothing of such work, and when asked how long he cut his logs for rails he replied, "About eight by ten." We took a large black oak log to a mill on Bureau Creek, twelve miles away and from the lumber Mr. O'Keefe made a new door to the house, laid a floor for the upper room, and from the black walnut lumber of an old wagon box he made a table. We hewed joists for the upper floor, cut out an extra log and made the door higher so that a man could walk through it without stooping. I never expect to realize greater feelings of luxury than these changes wrought. To always be obliged to stoop on entering one's dwelling would unfavorably affect the character. Later we added a small sleeping room, made of split logs, to the north side of the cabin, at its east end. The interstices between the logs were filled with mud made of clay. Such a house can be made very warm. To pay for this carpenter work Francis and I cut and split rails for Mr. Croover and hauled them onto the prairie to fence his claim. We split a part of them during some open weather in winter. For frozen timber does not split well. We hauled them on a sled with four yoke of oxen, in very cold weather and through deep snow. We left home soon after the sun was up and would not return until after it had set, and we had to do the chores before we left in the morning, and after we came home at night. We would first put logs at the bottom, and rails above. Where we could not load the logs, I would drive to the prairie and unload while my brother cut more logs. I remember of making my dinner there in the woods on what we called "Poverty Cakes." They were made of



cornmeal cooked in lard. They were not unpalatable at least to a hungry boy and were very nutritious. I have eaten them when frozen as hard as they could be, first pulverizing them by pounding them on a stump with my ax. For a few days we tried kindling a fire in the open air but we found its comforts so beguiling that we might as well remain at home as to go to the woods attended by such a luxury and we gave it up.

I was imperfectly clothed and froze my feet so that I was unable to walk for more than a month. My sister and my two brothers and myself would sometimes attend preaching, I will not say church, by hitching John and Jim, as uncouth and forbidding a pair of oxen as I ever saw, to the farm wagon, with boards across it for seats and driving two miles through the woods by an Indian trail, to the log house of Mr. Bridgeman. Rev. Mr. Vincent, a relative, I believe of a divine of some eminence of that name, preached. In the spring of 1838—or 39 I first saw and heard Luke Hitchcock preach in a small log school house in Palestine Grove. Since then my relations to him have been near. I boarded in his family before my marriage and Mrs. Ingals and I did immediately after we were married. I esteem no family more highly than I do his. When I went to my brother Francis I expected to be a farmer and took up a claim near his. But farm products brought very little. Wheat sold for forty or fifty cents a bushel in Chicago and the ninety miles of road we were obliged to travel in order to reach that market were about as nature made them. This induced me to improve my education and seek some other employment. With this in view I attended an Academy in Princeton, Ill. during the winter of 1839-40. In May, 1840, with brother George Addison, I went to Mt. Morris, Ill. and attended the Rock River Seminary during the summer.

The town then contained but three or four houses. The town site was on an undulation of the prairie of more than



the usual elevation, and this, combined with the name of Bishop Morris of the Methodist Episcopal Church gave to the place its appellation. We arrived at the Seminary on a hot afternoon about the middle of May. We were assigned a room about eight by ten feet on the second floor, fronting west. This exposed us to the fierce rays of the afternoon sun and made our quarters far from comfortable. The institution provided a bedstead as a part of the furnishings of the room, but we took with us our bedding, a part of which consisted of a tick filled with straw. Bedsteads were then made with rope crossing from side to side and end to end to support the bed instead of slats as now. As we supposed that the bedstead would be supplied with this rope we did not provide one, and none could be had in Mt. Morris. In view of this we nailed boards across the bedstead and placing our straw tick on these slept on it during the entire summer. At the end of this time the straw was not more than two inches thick and was nearly as fine as if it had been ground. I never, however, slept on a bed that seemed more downy and from which I arose in the morning with greater reluctance.

Myself and brother, with half a dozen other impecunious students worked on a farm about a mile from the Seminary, for our board. The farm was worked by the steward with whom we boarded in the Seminary building. After our supper we went to the field at five P.M. and returned at nine. After my ablutions I went immediately to bed and had but one unbroken slumber until I was awakened by the bell, soon after sunrise, that summoned me to the chapel for prayers. I hope the Mohammedans do not anathematize Muezzins as I did that (?) bell. I would gladly have hypothecated my hour in chapel for an added hour in bed. Among other things we cultivated broom corn and tobacco; my only experience in raising these products. I never profited so much in the same length of time in any other school. I had seven recitations daily and every hour was



actively and profitably employed. In the autumn of 1840 my brother Addison and I went to Jacksonville, Ill. and entered the preparatory department of the Illinois College; our design being to graduate from it. The winter of 1841-42 my brother Francis came there and lived and studied with us. Though he had a family and a farm, agriculture as a pursuit was so discouraging that he thought to give it up and study medicine. When I contrast the time then and now, I am almost indignant with the farmers and the others who complain of hard times and allege that they cannot keep mortgages off from their homes. We occupied college dormitories, boarded ourselves and I swept the halls for my tuition. I remained at the college two years; having in this time completed the freshman year in mathematics and prepared to enter it in the languages. Small as our expenses were, we were unable to obtain money to remain longer in school. I was not pleased with my experience at Jacksonville. Being in the preparatory department, it was to me neither a college nor an academy. As I was unable to remain at Jacksonville for graduation, I might better have continued at Mt. Morris. If competent to teach—if only the most primary school—this was the best resource open to any young man out of both money and employment. It was the custom in the central parts of the State, at that time, for a person desirous of teaching in a district, to circulate an article of agreement, specifying the proposed conditions of the school among those who had children to send, each parent signing for the number of scholars they would pay for. The common district school was thus in effect private. I heard of a district about seven miles northwest of Jacksonville where they wanted a teacher. I was told they had one in view with whom some of the patrons of the school were dissatisfied; and the disaffected ones asked me to be at the school-house at a date when a school meeting was to be held there, and they expressed the hope that I might be given the



school. So great was my inexperience and necessity that I was not deterred by this divided sentiment in the district from trying to secure the school. On the day appointed, I borrowed a horse and rode to the place, a small log school house in a dense wood. About ten citizens were there. The question was put to a vote and the other applicant had a majority. Returning, I reached Jacksonville in the evening of a dismal rainy day over very muddy roads. I was wet and tired, with such feelings of depression as this Bull Run defeat of my first business enterprise would naturally engender. Jonathan Colby, my brother-in-law, lived in Me-  
 nard County, thirty miles from Jacksonville. I determined to go there and make this a new base of operations. I set out at noon and walked to Indian Creek where I spent the night. It was during March, and while I slept about four inches of snow fell. In the morning this reflected the rays of a very brilliant sun. I did not know the dangers of long exposure of the eye to such a light, and I completed my journey. This caused an inflammation of my eyes that kept me for some days in a darkened corner with no companion save my own thoughts. When my eyes had recovered, I scoured the surrounding country for a school. I fortunately obtained one in Rock Creek, four miles south of Mr. Colby's house. My nephew, E. F. Ingals, afterwards taught one winter in the adjoining district. The term was to be of twelve weeks. I was to "board around" in each family a time corresponding with the number of pupils sent. I obtained signatures for thirteen pupils at three dollars each. I was to have the school fund in money—for the balance I was to receive cattle. On the morning when my school was to commence, I awoke, four miles away, with a violent shake of the ague. I was a stranger to everyone in the district. I could not keep my engagement and had no means of informing my patrons why I disappointed them. I had previously had ague at intervals, for a number of years, and, as I supposed, had "worn



it out," as was said when the system had lost its susceptibility to the poison. I have never had it since that morning. The next day I was able to ride through the district and explain to each one the reason for my absence. I appointed Monday of the next week as the time for commencing the school and then rode four miles further to Rockland Creek to consult Dr. Harrison, and to obtain quinine enough to break the ague. I felt embarrassed in meeting him, for I was a stranger. I had no money and I did not then know that doctors were expected to treat all alike—the same, if they had no money, as when they had. A short time before I had paid Dr. Charles Chandler the last twenty-five cents I had for drawing a tooth. I had lost but one tooth before and have lost none since, and I now write Feb. 21, 1892. During the three month of my first school engagement, I had but sixty cents in money and that was not my own. It was used only for postage and my correspondence was limited. At the close of the school, I had as the school fund thirteen Mexican silver dollars in my hand. I have never since experienced such pleasure from material possessions as I then felt. In my exultation I could sing:

"I have money, I have money,  
 Gods—a joyful sight to see!  
 I have money, I have money,  
 Nothing more shall trouble me."

I made up another school for the winter of four months' duration. I had about forty pupils—a number of them much older than myself. I secured a good boarding place, that sent a number of children to the school. We all carried our dinner and partook of it in the schoolroom, and then I would play ball with the scholars during the remainder of the hours of intermission. I had two saddle horses and passed a very convivial and pleasant winter with the young people of the vinctage. I had no school on Saturday and



this with Sunday and my evenings, gave me abundant leisure. There were no light carriages there for there were no roads over which they could be driven. It was the ambition of every lady to have a good horse and equipment and nearly all were skillful and graceful equestrians. We made up some cavalcades that I fancy would have been a credit to those of the titled gentry and proud dames of the age of falconry. At the close of my school, after drawing the public money, I took notes for stock of each of my patrons for the balance they owed me; of one a calf, of another, a yearling, a cow or a steer, one or more as the amount might be; the smaller animals making convenient change. This was the winter of 1843 and '4. In the spring I rode on horseback to Nauvoo and spent two weeks in the hotel where Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism boarded. I sat at the same table, conversed with him and saw a good deal of him, but could not decipher his character to my own satisfaction. He was then a candidate for President of the U. S. and expressed his belief that he would be elected. When told that no one out of Nauvoo expected to vote for him and asked on what he based his hopes, he replied, "The Lord will turn the hearts of the people." He was shamefully murdered a few months after, while in the Carthage jail, a prisoner of the State of Illinois. I returned from Nauvoo to Menard County and exchanged my cattle notes for horses. These commanded a better price in the northern part of Illinois than in the longer settled central portions; so riding one horse and leading two others, I went to Lee County, Illinois, where I sold my horses for fifty dollars each. I then entered the family of my brother-in-law, Dr. R. F. Adams, working in the meantime for my board, and commenced the study of medicine with him. He then lived in a log cabin on the east end of Palestine Grove. His nearest neighbors were on the south, one mile; west, two miles; north, four miles and east, seven miles. It had for some time



been my intention to become a physician. While at school at Jacksonville I had been very anxious to enter the Military Academy at West Point, but was dissuaded from making an effort to secure the appointment by the advice of the professors of the college. As we could not then foresee the War of the Rebellion, I think their counsel was wise, but subsequent events made me regret that I did not have a military education. While with Dr. Adams, as I worked for my board, my expenses were very light. During the harvest season of 1844, I earned thirty dollars by working thirty days in harvest, wages for this season being exceptionally high. My brother Henry owed me a few hundred dollars that he had received from my father's estate, as my guardian. As he had no money, I took some cattle of him that he had obtained in McDonough County, Illinois, in some business transaction. It will illustrate the dearth of money in the country and the consequent stagnation of business when I say that I received thirty-one head of cattle for one hundred dollars applied on his account. The number was made up of ten cows, eight three-year-old steers, the others being yearlings and calves.

In driving the cattle to Lee County, some of the calves could not travel so fast as the older ones and I sold four of them in the village of Abingdon, Knox County, for five dollars. One night we reached a small grove where but one person lived, and he a bachelor. We went to his log house, but he was absent, looking after a prairie fire that illuminated the entire heavens. I never saw a dirtier habitation than his. There was nothing in the house to eat except a little bread. We found a pail which we washed; milked our cows in it—ate the bread and drank the milk. His barn of logs had a roof but no gables. We went there and slept on the hay in the loft. It rained during the night and the damp wind blowing through the open structure gave me a cold that made me sick. My brother Henry and his son Ephraim



were with me. We had an old buggy with an extemporized seat that I could remove; which I did, and made me a bed of hay on which I could lie down and drive the horse. As I could not render any service about the cattle, I left my brother and drove to Princeton, where I spent the night and reached my home at Palestine Grove the next day. I was embarrassed by the curiosity my *outré* equipage seemed to excite whenever I passed a habitation. Henry and Ephraim lost their road and were obliged to spend a night on the prairie without food. My brother made a bed for his son—then about ten years old—of dried grass in a gully washed by the rain, where he slept comfortably, while Henry got such rest as the care of his horse and no bed would allow him. In the morning they found themselves not far from a house, where they got breakfast, and leaving the cattle on the prairie, rode ten miles to Dr. Adams' where I was.

The next day I was able to mount a horse and go for the cattle. On the way I passed the house of an Irish Justice named Falvey. My brother, George Addison—just admitted to the bar—was there to try his first case. I proposed to remain to hear and witness the trial, but my brother gave me no encouragement to do so; and I left. I afterwards learned that he retired behind the cabin with his client—who was the defendant in the case—for a private consultation, when he advised him to mount his horse and ride away, which he did, and the case was never again called in Court.

I was to cut hay on the prairie to winter my cattle. As I had no scythe, and there was no near opportunity to purchase one, I hired to Dr. Adams to drive a horse team, loaded with wheat to Chicago. It was just before the first government sale of lands for that part of Illinois, and everything possible was converted into money for their purchase. Some years of preparation had been made for this event, by saving every piece of coin that was possible, and yet the settlers did not have more than fifty, one hundred, or two



hundred dollars each; one hundred being an average amount. This would buy eighty acres of land, as one dollar and a quarter an acre was the minimum price.

We had as many as six teams in our company, some of them being oxen, and these made the same speed as the horses. The prairie was very wet, the roads were unimproved and with thirty bushels of wheat on a wagon, we were often obliged to double teams and to carry a part of the load across the sloughs on our shoulders. We camped at night on the prairies, most of the time, as this was less expensive than to stay at a tavern. It was a long tiresome trip and the money obtained by selling the wheat at about fifty cents a bushel was very little. I, however, had my scythe, and the lives of my cattle during the approaching winter were dependent on it. I was not able to buy grain for them and they were much emaciated, and some died from poverty before they were again permitted to crop the grass of spring.

In the autumn of 1845, I went to Chicago to attend my first course of lectures at Rush Medical College. I drove in eight of my steers, then four years old, to get money to meet my expenses. Archibald Clybourn—the first man to butcher cattle in Chicago—then lived in a brick house on the west bank of the North Branch of the Chicago River, about two miles from its junction with the main river. I drove the cattle to his house and sold them for eight dollars each. I boarded on the east side of Dearborn Street, between Randolph and Washington, with the family of Dr. Cornell. He died during the winter, while I stood at his bedside. His widow who, by a subsequent marriage, became Mrs. A. E. Bishop, still lives.

Before coming to the city I corresponded with Dr. Daniel Brainard—the President of Rush Medical College—and arranged for a credit of sixty dollars for my general tickets, for which I gave my note. I think this circumstance had a favorable influence on my later life. During the following



summer I borrowed the money and paid the note. I applied to Lewis Clapp for the loan—the only man near who ever had any surplus money. I found him on a remote part of his farm plowing with a yoke of oxen. I was only a boy, and hardly knew him. He let me have the money on my note. It did not then seem strange to me that he should do so, but as I reflect upon it now, it does. I afterwards learned that the professors of the college divided among themselves, the notes of such students as could not pay their fees in advance, and my note fell to Dr. Brainard. Prompt payment of indebtedness was always a strong recommendation of any person, to his favor. This was the commencement of my relations to him, that afterwards became intimate, and always were very agreeable to me. For a time I was a private pupil in his office. In the autumn of 1846 he gave me employment for the college one month by which I paid my lecture fees for the approaching session. This was a matter of no small importance to me. I went to Milwaukee by steam boat and returned by stage. I then bought a horse for forty dollars and rode through as many towns as I could reach, as far south as Springfield, Illinois, and returned. I obtained subscriptions, and made collections for a Medical Journal, and saw all the medical students I could find and tried to induce them to attend lectures at Rush. I sold the horse when I had no further use for it, for the same price Dr. Brainard had paid for it. Along with Mrs. Brainard, Dr. Brainard made me the executor of his will. Mrs. Brainard elected not to qualify, and I settled the estate which was valued at about four hundred thousand dollars. For that time—1866—this was a large estate. This he had accumulated himself—though he died of cholera when in the prime of life. He settled in Chicago in 1836. When I set out to obtain subscribers for the Journal, he gave me a small valise to strap on the pommel of my saddle, in which to carry specimen numbers. As he did so, he said, “When I came to Chicago



that was my pillow until I had earned money enough to buy a bed." He was a very handsome man—he had a very superior mind, and as a conversationalist, one of the most delightful to whom I ever listened. He was an honest man, and a good man. By those who did not know him well, he was often misunderstood. He never sought popularity, and was respected more than he was loved. He was always accorded the first place in the profession of the North-west while he lived. He was a very instructive man and I am conscious that he exerted considerable influence on my life.

I graduated in February, 1847, and returning immediately to Lee County, I formed a partnership with Dr. R. F. Adams to commence on the first of the following May. I was to bear one-third of the expense of the business and to receive one-third of the collections. The first year we charged eighteen hundred dollars which was mostly collectible, though a good deal of it had to be received in labor or farm products. I bought a riding horse for forty-five dollars, a saddle and bridle for twenty. The last seemed to me an extravagance, but it was an excellent outfit, though second-hand. During the heat of summer, it was inconvenient to ride on horseback. I could not carry an umbrella as a protection from sun or rain, or extra wraps for sudden changes, or the chill of night. For three years I hired an old buggy for three months each summer—I think for one dollar a month. The buggy would have been idle had I not used it—it was of but little value, and a little money then went a long way.

In 1850 Dr. Adams went to California—the partnership was dissolved and I took the entire business. He had a light open buggy with a wood axle such as is never seen now, which I bought. I had a pair of saddle bags made by a local shoemaker which I wore entirely out, and then bought of the manufacturers a regulation pair that I still have. I practiced only a few months on the east end of Palestine



Grove. The village of Lee Centre was laid out and Dr. Adams built a house there which we occupied, and his place was my residence until I removed to Chicago ten years later.

On the thirtieth day of April, 1851, I was married to Melissa R. Church, the daughter of Thomas Church, Esq., at his residence, 149 Wabash Avenue, Chicago. My brother Addison had married her elder sister, Miss Mary E. Church, which doubtless led to my acquaintance with her sister Melissa. A happy domestic life even could it be described, is too sacred to be exposed to public view. It is enough for me to say that we lived happily together until her death on the 20th of November, 1888. She had a comely form, beautiful features, fine glossy hair which to the day of her death was as black as the raven's wing. Uninfluenced by the changing fashions of the times she always wore it the same way—brushed smoothly over her temples. She was remarkable for correctness of judgment, honesty of purpose and force of character. A more honest woman never lived. She gave her life unselfishly to the best interests of her family. She had a very generous and hospitable disposition. During the War of the Rebellion, she was associated with a number of other benevolent ladies of the city in conducting the Soldiers' Rest, and to it she gave many days of hard labor. The object of the organization was to give the regiments food and rest for a day, as they passed through the city to and from the front. Especial attention was shown to veterans returning from severe campaigns. Confederate prisoners were sometimes cared for and always with great kindness. Though an invalid, and a great sufferer, several of her last years were devoted with solicitous anxiety to the relief of the ill of the poor and unfortunate. Thirty years of her life were saddened by the very painful disease, angina pectoris, and several years before her death were made doubly painful and helpless by an aneurism of the



aorta near the heart. Her general arterial system became atheromatous and she died suddenly of hemorrhage from rupture of an artery of the brain. Her last day was spent pleasantly with the ladies of the Aid Society of Unity Church, working for the poor. Just as I arrived for her, she fell down. I brought her home insensible and she died in a few hours at 10:00 P.M., Nov. 20, 1888. We commenced housekeeping March 4, 1854, in Lee Centre, on the southwest corner of the Dixon Road and the street leading to Amboy, in a story and a half frame house containing six rooms. It had a good cellar, a barn large enough for my buggy and two horses—a good well, an orchard and about one acre of land. For the place, I paid seven hundred dollars. It made us a good home for several years when I sold it to Judge Fuller of Rockford for one thousand dollars in money, and one hundred and sixty acres of land that I sold soon after for twenty-four hundred dollars. Occurring as this did, early in my business life, it had an important influence on my later financial experiences. In this house our eldest son was born and died April 7, 1855.

While at Lee Centre I worked very hard, practicing, buying and selling land, opening a farm, loaning money and transacting a very miscellaneous business. My health was impaired from over work and I sold my house with the design of giving up practice in Lee Centre. I recuperated rapidly with rest and soon felt able to resume business. We purchased the little stone house built originally by Dr. Adams for an office. To this we made a small addition and lived in it until we removed to Chicago, February, 1857. In this house our daughter Mary Elizabeth was born, August 17, 1856. I located in Lee Centre, because having no money, it was easier than to go among strangers. I did not intend to remain permanently. I practiced there ten years—six after my marriage. When we removed to Chicago in 1857 we had accumulated, according to my estimate,



twenty thousand dollars. To accomplish this, my wife, in her place, had done fully her share. Though reared in a city, in what was then thought to be affluence, she performed every necessary labor, submitted to the privations of a new country, and practiced the most rigid economy with a cheerfulness that made it easy for me to cooperate with her.

When we came to Chicago, we rented my father-in-law's furnished house, 149 Wabash Avenue, boarding Mr. and Mrs. Church for the rent. May 1, 1858, we moved to a small frame house on the south side of Adams Street between Wabash and Michigan Avenues. Here our second daughter, Lucy Storrs Ingals was born, June 1st, 1858. Mary at the time had scarlet fever and came very near dying. May 1st, 1859, we moved to Monroe Street where the Columbia Theatre now stands, where our third daughter, Alice Church Ingals, was born, November 24th, 1859. Dearborn Street did not then extend south of Monroe, and the location was very retired. We rented our house of James M. Adsit, the banker, who was our next door neighbor. May 1st, 1861, we moved to the southwest corner of Jefferson and Jackson Streets. Here our son, Thomas Church Ingals, was born, July 16, 1866. He lived but a few days. Our two sons are buried on our cemetery lot in Graceland directly west of their mother's grave and near the boundary of our plat. Their graves have no marks.

When I first came to the city, I opened an office on the east side of Clark Street between Lake and Randolph Streets in what was known as the Tribune Building. From there I removed to the south-west corner of Clark and Madison where I remained five years, and from thence to my own building at 188 Clark Street. While I kept an office away from my residence, it was always on Clark Street, except for a short time while I was rebuilding after the fire of 1871, when I was on Randolph Street at the north-east corner of Clinton. I purchased of John Creighton for

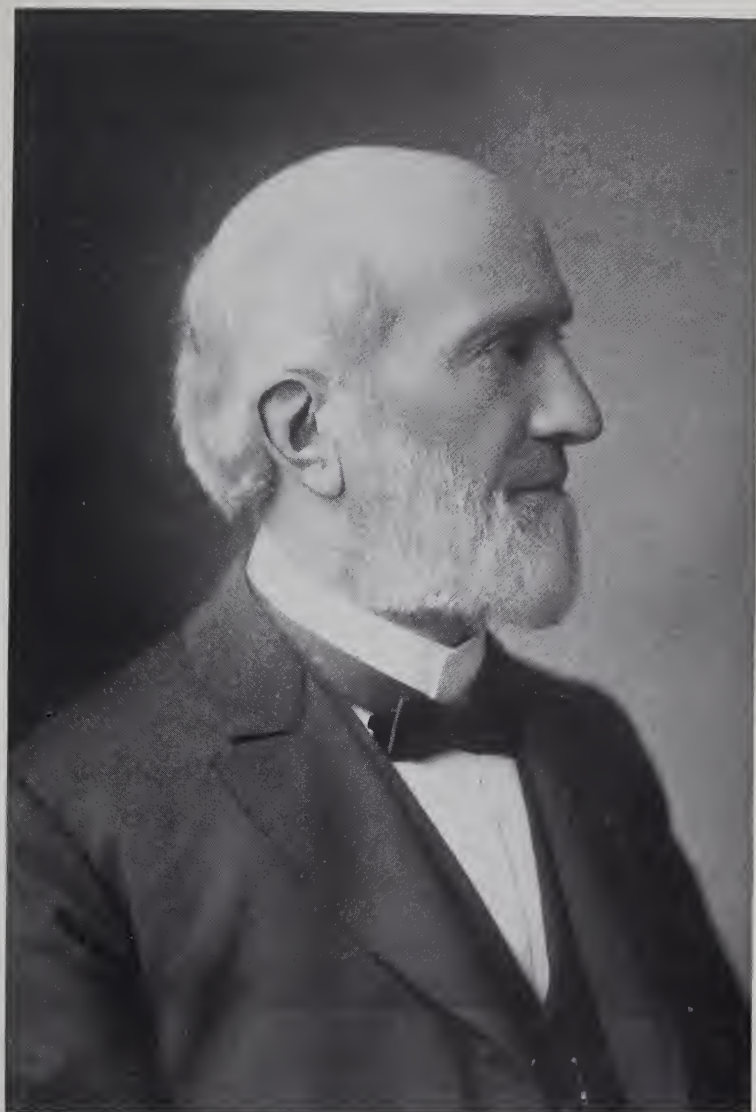


twenty-four thousand dollars the residence, 34 Throop Street to which we moved May 1, 1869, and this has since been our home. Here our fourth daughter, Elizabeth Thomas Ingals, was born, June 29, 1871. Of our six children no two were born in the same house.

We paid a great price for our house, for at the time of the purchase, property was very high, but subsequent events made it a fortunate purchase. It was out of the track of the fire that nearly destroyed the city in 1871—Jefferson Park in our front, being open and ornamental ground, made it an especially desirable place for Mrs. Ingals during nearly two years of painful helplessness. She could lie on her bed and with her field-glass watch the varying life of the Park, free from the feeling that she might be subject to observation from dwellings across the street. The house, too, was so constructed that I could place an elevator in it so that when she had so far convalesced as to be able to leave her bed, or ride in a carriage, she could be brought down to the lower rooms of the house, or to the street.

Soon after I came to Chicago, I was made Associate Editor of the North-Western Medical and Surgical Journal with Dr. Daniel Brainard, and in 1859 I was appointed Professor of Materia Medica and Medical Jurisprudence in Rush Medical College, and a member of its Board of Trustees. I did not apply for any of these places, nor do I remember one instance in my life, when I have solicited, or in any way sought any office, place, or business. I have always had all the work I wished to do, and all the publicity I desired. I have been three times a candidate for a political office, but I never sought such a position. I was one year Township Assessor of Lee Centre. I served one term as School Commissioner of Lee County. My name was once placed on the Republican ticket for County Commissioner of Cook County. I published a letter saying I was not consulted about the nomination; that I looked on office





EPHRAIM INGALS







holding as a tax which a citizen, when called on, should be willing to bear his equitable share, the same as any other tax, but that he was under no obligation to seek such place—that I did not desire the office, but if elected I would perform its duties as well as I was able. The entire ticket was defeated, but I believe I received fewer votes than some saloon-keepers whose names were associated with mine on the ticket. I do not regret that I allowed my name to remain on the ticket in accordance with my convictions of a citizen's duty, but with my present view, I would not do it again. There are many competent persons who desire such places. The private station is more profitable—I hold it to be equally honorable, and to me it is more pleasant.

I was once President of the Illinois State Medical Society and four times of the Chicago Medical Society. The appointment of Professor of Materia Medica and Medical Jurisprudence in Rush Medical College was tendered me in 1859 without its being sought by me, and I accepted it. I did this with reluctance as I thought myself unqualified, by reason of my slender attainments, properly to fill it. My scruples were overcome by the arguments of the founder of the college, Dr. Daniel Brainard. I was elected a member of the Board of Trustees of the College, and Treasurer of its faculty. When the last college building was erected on the north side of the river, I was made chairman of its building committee. I took an active interest in the work and gave to it much time and thought. Notwithstanding my deficiencies, I always maintained a good standing with the class, which perhaps justified the wisdom of my appointment to the chair. I did not teach specific facts as I could have done had I known more of medicine, but I gave the young men conservative—and as I think—correct principles for the use of medicine, and, in a general way, I believe I exerted a favorable influence on their character in this formative period of their lives. The necessity for study



which the position imposed, the mental quickening induced by a widening intercourse with men, and the practice of public speaking, were all developing and useful to me.

Without having previously apprised anyone connected with the College of my purpose, I tendered the resignation of my Professorship to its Trustees. Action on the communication was taken as follows:

"Rush Medical College, July 31, 1871. Ephraim Ingals, M. D., Professor of Materia Medica and Medical Jurisprudence in Rush College since the Ninth day of July, 1859, having this day presented to the Board of Trustees his letter of resignation, the Board cannot permit the occasion to pass without placing upon permanent record in the archives of the College, and communicating to him personally, their high appreciation of the assiduity and distinguished ability with which he has discharged the duties of his department, and at the same time the eminent business talent, sagacity and integrity, with which he has so long filled the position of Treasurer of the College, and especially as one of the Building Committee of the new College which edifice itself owes its existence largely to his liberality, confidence and energy. The Board of Trustees accept the resignation of Prof. Ingals, not willingly, but from his strong assurance that the reasons controlling him in presenting it are imperative.

"As evidencing their sense of his long and meritorious services to the College, the Board unanimously confer upon him the Emeritus Professorship of Materia Medica and Medical Jurisprudence, and through their Committee, hereby tender to him their best and sincerest wishes for his long continued health, prosperity and happiness.

"By order of the Board of Trustees,

J. ADAMS ALLEN,  
MOSES GUNN,  
ROBERT L. REA,  
Committee."



It was very fortunate for me that I resigned when I did. The college then was on a full tide of prosperity. It had a large, new excellent building; a full class was assured for 1871 and '2, and everything was harmonious in the Faculty. The college and its records were burned in the fire that consumed the city the following October. Had I continued in the Faculty until the occurrence of this calamity, I would have felt that I could not honorably retire from my work in the school when it was in trouble. I suffered by the fire in buildings consumed—loss of rents and changes of values, an amount I then estimated at one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. I was obliged to incur heavy indebtedness to replace the buildings burned, to secure tenants for the new structures—for which, to our great disappointment, there was but little demand—to pay my principal and interest. This all gave me fifteen years of very hard and vexatious work. Had I been obliged to do my share of the added work necessary to rebuild the College, my health would surely have been impaired—possibly undermined.

The only thing that made me reluctant to take the step was the thought that it might be detrimental to the interests of my nephew, Dr. E. Fletcher Ingals. As he had just graduated, I could hardly ask that he be given the place in the Faculty that I had just vacated, but had I been willing to continue to teach two or three years longer, I think he might have been appointed. I am now satisfied that it was better for him that he did not have it. Had he been appointed to the place, he very likely would have drifted into general practice instead of a specialty, and obstacles were thrown in his way for which he was in no way responsible, which he has overcome greatly to his credit and advantage.

Since my graduation in 1847 from the Rush Medical College, I have held relations to it of more or less intimacy, as professor, treasurer, chairman of the building commit-



tee for the new college on the North Side, and member of the Board of Trustees.

When the new building was erected on the West Side to replace the one burned on the North Side, in the fire that consumed the city in 1871, I gave towards its construction more than \$2,000., and in 1898, I contributed \$25,000. to help cancel the college debt of \$72,000. which was required as a condition precedent to its affiliation with the University of Chicago. But my donations were never limited to the interests of a single school. I did what I could to promote the interests of the entire profession, and through the profession, the public at large.

I gave \$10,000 to the North-Western University to aid it in building the medical laboratory for the Chicago Medical College; its Medical Department on Dearborn Street. I also offered during a number of years, an annual prize of \$100. to the member of its medical class who received the highest marks in all branches. I did this to express my approbation for the increased requirements that school was exacting of those who sought to enter the profession through its teaching. I long used what influence I could exert to induce Rush Medical College to raise its requirements for the degree, and I am happy now—October, 1898—that an advance, sufficient in my judgment, for the present—has been reached.

I thought the affiliation of the school with the University of Chicago was a matter of great importance, and a number of years ago, I offered to give the Trustees of the College, \$50,000. if they unite with it. This union will help to hasten the day when Chicago will become the most important point for medical instruction and study in the United States.



## HISTORICAL NOTES

### A CORRECTION

The Illinois State Historical Society,  
Springfield, Illinois.

Dear Sirs:

I write to correct an erroneous statement made on Page 165, Volume XXVIII, Number 3, October 1935, Journal of The Illinois State Historical Society, reading as follows:

If we knew where to make the connection, this French hunter was probably one of many who collected furs for Gurdon Saltonstall Hubbard for John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company, whose biography was recently published in the Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society. Mr. Hubbard has been called the father of modern business in Danville and Chicago. The Chicago suburb, Hubbard Woods, was named for him.

It is the last sentence, "The Chicago suburb, Hubbard Woods, was named for him," to which I take exception. Gilbert Hubbard came to Chicago from Boston definitely in 1850 or 1851 although he had passed through Chicago on his way to Milwaukee both in 1843 and 1847. When he finally determined to make Chicago his home, he formed a business connection with Foster & Robb in the ship chandlery business, under the firm name of Hubbard & Robb. That firm continued under the same name until 1854 or 1855 (I am not sure of this date. Gilbert Hubbard was born in Massachusetts, 9th of July, 1819, died in Chicago as above stated and was buried in Rosehill Cemetery), when it was changed to Gilbert Hubbard & Company, my father, George B. Carpenter, and J. Spencer Turner being the com-



## HISTORICAL NOTES

pany. Subsequently Mr. Turner withdrew and on the death of Gilbert Hubbard May 6, 1881, the firm name was changed to Geo. B. Carpenter & Company. I am giving you these details as a foundation for my knowledge of the Hubbard Woods. When Mr. Hubbard died, he left a tract of land of approximately 109 acres bordering on the shore of Lake Michigan in what is now Hubbard Woods. That property was sold while I was practicing law long before I went on the bench, to various men of position and high standing, such as Walter L. Fisher, Rudolph Matz, Murray Nelson, Jr., William B. McIlvaine, Frederic Mather-Smith, Robert P. Lamonte, Douglas Smith and two or three others. These men built substantial residential improvements upon their various lots. The railroad station nearest the property at that time on the North Western line was called "Lakeside." The Hubbard tract of 109 acres even after it was subdivided had for many years been known as "Hubbard Woods."

It so happened that there was southwest of Chicago a race track of more or less notorious repute known as "Lakeside" and the new purchasers in Hubbard Woods desired to have a change of their station and post office name. Therefore, I took the matter up with the North Western Railroad and the United States Government and the change was made from Lakeside to Hubbard Woods. The exact date this was done I cannot now recall.

I bring this to your attention because the article quoted from your magazine states that Hubbard Woods was named for Gurdon S. Hubbard, which was not the fact.

Very truly yours,  
Geo. A. Carpenter.

120 S. LaSalle Street,  
Chicago, Illinois.



ANOTHER CORRECTION

The Illinois State Historical Society,  
Springfield, Illinois.

Dear Sirs:

In "Historic Spots in Henry County" by Lydia Colby, page 169 of one of the late numbers of the historical publications it says that the committee of purchase bought 99 townships of land in Kewanee and Wethersfield townships.

The statement should have been 99 quarter-sections. The land was bought in Henry and Bureau counties and in Kewanee, Wethersfield, Burns and Neponset townships.

I believe that there were more than four of the original stockholders who became bona fide settlers in the settlement. I shall try to prove this as soon as I find time.

From the records of the sale of these lands and of papers I obtained in Wethersfield, Connecticut, several years ago I have written the enclosed authentic account of the sale and purchase of the Wethersfield colony lands.

PURCHASE AND SALE OF THE WETHERSFIELD  
COLONY LANDS

In the fall of 1835 a small group of men, associates and friends of Caleb J. Tenney, pastor of a local church, and of the wealthy Chester Bulkley, met in the vestry of the Congregational church at Wethersfield, Connecticut. The purpose of this meeting was to form a colony for "promoting the cause of education and piety in the Mississippi Valley."

At a second meeting held February 15, 1836 the name "Wethersfield" was adopted for the proposed colony, and the association for promoting the colony was styled "The Connecticut Association." At this meeting Sylvester Blish, Elizur Goodrich, a surveyor, and Ithamar Pillsbury were made purchasing agents for the association.

The purchasing agents came to Henry County, Illinois, in the spring of 1836. Between May 7, 1836 and March 2, 1837, these men surveyed and purchased from the U. S.



## HISTORICAL NOTES

government 99 quarter-sections of land and 11 fractional parts of quarter-sections. The following is a statement of the lands in the first purchase:

Wethersfield township, Henry county, Illinois.....	8249.99	acres
Kewanee township, Henry county, Illinois.....	6159.63	acres
Burns township, Henry county, Illinois.....	80.00	acres
Neponset township, Henry county, Illinois.....	950.82	acres

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Total of the first purchase.....15440.44 acres

In this purchase there were:—

- 79 full quarter-sections.
- 20 fractional quarter-sections.
- 11 fractional parts of quarter-sections.

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110 parcels of land in all.

For the purpose of allotment to stockholders and other purchasers the timbered quarter-sections in Barren Grove were divided into twenty-acre lots and the village land to be allotted or sold into two and one-half acre lots.

The lands were purchased from the government by Goodrich and Blish for the association. On March 2, 1837 these two men deeded the land to Chester Bulkley, secretary and treasurer of the association for \$1,000.00 and other considerations. Bulkley and after five years Samuel Galpin who became treasurer and secretary deeded the land to the stockholders or to other purchasers.

On April 14, 1837 another full quarter-section of land was purchased in Wethersfield township. This made the total purchase 100 quarter-sections and 11 fractional parts of quarter-sections and brought the total acreage up to 15600.44.

By 1848 the colony lands had been disposed of to stockholders or to other purchasers except 42 quarter-sections, 20 timber lots and one village lot. These remaining lands of the association were advertised to be sold at auction at the Fessenden hotel in Hartford, Connecticut on February 2, 1848.



## HISTORICAL NOTES

But on the day before the sale was to take place the stockholders met and indefinitely postponed the sale. A plan was adopted by which each stockholder was assessed \$28.00 to meet the expenses incurred to date and not paid. On March 7, 1848 a distribution of these remaining lands was made by lot among the stockholders, each receiving about eighty acres of land.

With this distribution the Connecticut Association ceased to exist.

Frank H. Craig.

Kewanee, Illinois.

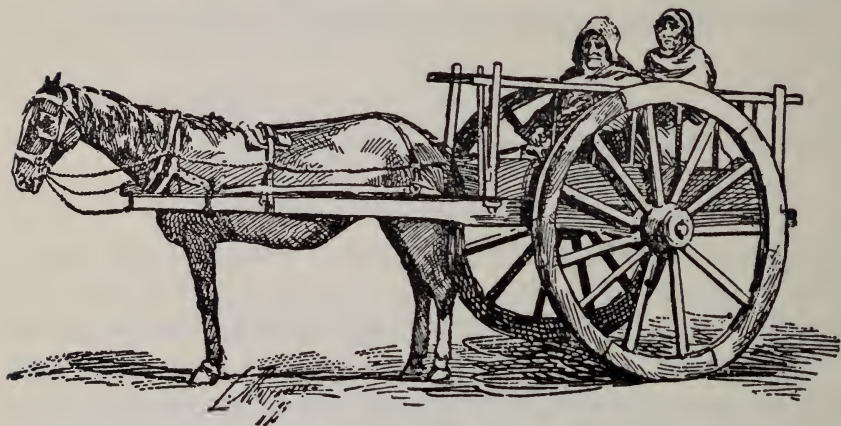
## THE RED RIVER CART

In W. J. Healy's *Women of Red River* is to be found the following account of a young girl's experiences in traveling from the Red River of the North to enter Knox College at Galesburg:

In the spring of 1848 father took my younger sister Maria and me with him on his way to St. Louis, and left us at Knox College at Galesboro [Galesburg] in Illinois. We were three weeks travelling across the plains to St. Paul. We had three Red River carts with horses and a force of six men. The carts were without springs, of course, but with our bedding comfortably arranged in them, they did not jolt us so badly, except where the ground was very rough, and then we could get out and walk. On the way down we were joined by a party from Oregon, with four carts; with that party was the Roman Catholic bishop of that territory, Bishop Close. I remember that we met a man who was starving, a deserter from Fort Ripley, one of the little stockaded places where small forces of United States cavalry were stationed. We told him how to get to the Roman Catholic Mission at Red Lake river. At St.



Paul we had to wait three weeks for a boat to take us down the Mississippi to Oquaki [Oquawka], where my father hired a coach with four horses, which took us to Galesboro [Galesburg] over roads that were almost impossible in places. But by that time we were used to rough roads and other discomforts of travel. My sister Maria, who was four years younger than I, thought it all great fun, as I did. We had the high



A RED RIVER CAR

spirits of youth, and my father seemed to us as young in spirit as we were ourselves, so that there was real companionship between the three of us.

Since this was the first reference to a "Red River cart" which I had ever seen, I decided to find out the nature of the vehicle. Inquiry of the State Historical Society of North Dakota brought the illustration, reproduced herewith, and also an account of its origin. Apparently the Red River cart was devised about 1800 by trappers of the Hudson Bay Company. It was a primitive conveyance. The wheels were without tires, wooden pegs took the place of iron spikes, and raw hide was used for harness and gear.

First mention of the Red River cart is found in a letter written September 20, 1801, in which the following passage occurs: "We now have a sort of cart which facilitates our



## HISTORICAL NOTES

transportation very much. They are about four feet high and perfectly straight, the spokes being placed perpendicularly, without the least leaning outward, and only four in each wheel. These carts will convey about five pieces (450 pounds) and each drawn by one horse."

It will be noticed that the wheels of the cart illustrated here contain eleven spokes, while the writer of the letter just quoted mentions but four spokes to a wheel. The illustration, however, pictures a cart of the year 1867, while the letter describes a much earlier vehicle. In all probability, an increase in the number of spokes, with perhaps other refinements, was a natural evolution.

Such investigation as I have made leads me to believe that these carts are now very rare. Possibly some reader of the Journal possesses more information than I have been able to find. If so, I should be glad to hear from him.

Earnest Elmo Calkins.

247 Park Avenue,  
New York, N. Y.



## HISTORICAL NEWS

The Illinois State Historical Society held its annual Illinois Day Meeting in Springfield on Tuesday, December 3, 1935. After an invocation by the Rev. H. M. Hilderbrandt of Springfield, Dr. Laurence M. Larson, Professor of History at the University of Illinois and President of the Board of Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library, spoke in appreciation of the late Dr. Otto L. Schmidt, President of the Society for many years. Following Doctor Larson's remarks, Dr. Percy Holmes Boynton of the University of Chicago spoke on the subject, "The Serious Side of Mark Twain." At the close of the meeting those in attendance were the guests of Governor Horner at a reception at the Governor's Mansion.

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At a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Illinois State Historical Society in Springfield on December 3, 1935, Dr. James A. James of Evanston was elected President of the Society in place of Dr. Otto L. Schmidt, deceased.

Doctor James is Dean Emeritus of the graduate school of Northwestern University and former head of the Department of History. He has been an active member of the Illinois State Historical Society almost since its organization in 1900 and a director since 1913. He is the author of a biography of George Rogers Clark, and of a number of papers which have appeared in the Society's publications, and also the editor of the two volumes of George Rogers Clark Papers which have been published in the Illinois Historical Collections.



## HISTORICAL NEWS

The Board also elected Earnest E. East of Peoria and Wayne C. Townley of Bloomington to fill vacancies on the Board caused by the death of Mark D. Batchelder and the resignation of Lincoln H. Weldon until the Society's next annual meeting.

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The Peoria Historical Society continues to function actively. At its November meeting Y. A. Heghin of the Peoria High School faculty spoke on the subject, "Anglo-Italian Rivalry in the Near East." Dr. Herbert A. Kellar, Secretary of the McCormick Historical Association, Chicago, will speak before the Society in January; and Dr. Theodore C. Pease, Professor of History at the University of Illinois and editor of the Illinois Historical Collections, will address the May meeting. The Society is actively assembling documentary material relating to Peoria history, and is offering a cash prize to high school students for the best essay on a local history subject.

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The Madison County Historical Society held its annual meeting on December 7, 1935, at the court house in Edwardsville. A paper on the early history of Highland, Illinois, by Mrs. Soloman Suppiger, was the feature of the program. The Society's next meeting will be held during the coming summer at Shurtleff College, Alton.

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At the annual meeting of the Woodford County Historical Society, held at the Metamora Court House, Metamora, November 8, 1935, the following officers were elected: President, L. J. Freese, Eureka; Vice-President, Harrison Kerrick, Minonk; Secretary, Mrs. Bertha Snyder, Metamora; Treasurer, W. H. Smith, Eureka; Custodian, A. F. Marshall, Eureka; Assistant Custodian, Miss Lillian Thena, Metamora; Trustee, George Wadsworth, Eureka.



The Des Plaines Historical Society met on December 9, 1935. After the installation of officers Mr. Paul M. Angle, Secretary of the Illinois State Historical Society, spoke on the opportunities for effective historical work which local societies enjoy. The principal address of the evening concerned Robert Kennicott, American scientist, who was a citizen of Des Plaines. Plans were made for systematic work looking towards the preservation of Des Plaines history materials.

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The one hundredth anniversary of the founding of DeWitt County and the city of Clinton was celebrated with a program of parades, pageants and speeches which commenced on October 3 and ended on October 6. Thousands, including many former residents, joined in the centennial celebration.

One of the most interesting features of the observance was the pageant, presented three times, in which events of the last one hundred years were re-enacted. Although settlers reached what is now DeWitt County as early as 1820, neither the county nor the county seat was founded until 1835. Both were named for DeWitt Clinton, Governor of New York and founder of the Erie Canal.

To record permanently the founding of Clinton a monument has been erected on the high school grounds. A bronze tablet, affixed to a granite boulder, states that at this spot, in 1835, while resting their ox team, Jesse W. Fell and James Allin chose the mound on which they stood as the proper site for a future city.

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A centennial parade, special church services, and the performance of an historical pageant marked the centennial of Marshall, in Clark County, observed on September 21 and 22. The Marshall *Herald* for September 20 contained a number of valuable historical articles, including a biogra-



## HISTORICAL NEWS

phy of William B. Archer, Marshall's founder, by John B. Prevo; histories of the schools and churches of Marshall by Mrs. C. M. Bubeck and Eunice Gilbert; and a summary of Marshall's history as it is exemplified by the town's buildings, by Florence Hodge.

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Recent months have seen an awakening, or perhaps only a quickening, of interest in the early history of Henry County. On Constitution Day (September 17) the Henry County Bar Association and the Geneseo Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, marked the site of the town of Richmond, the county's first seat of government. Addresses by Charles G. Davis on "The First Circuit Court of Henry County," and Joseph L. Shaw, on "The Illinois Judiciary of 1839," were features of the meeting. On October 13 the Geneseo Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, dedicated a bronze tablet recording the history of the Brandenburg Tavern. Over 200 people attended the dedication ceremonies, which included addresses by George D. Brandenburg, Lydia Colby and Henry Waterman.

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On September 6 and 7 the town of Vermont in Fulton County celebrated the completion of its first century. Featured in the program were a display of objects of historical interest, an historical parade and a pageant depicting the town's history, and also a wide variety of amusements. The Vermont *Union* published a centennial edition devoted to the history of Vermont and the region of which it is the center.

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The recent centennial of Franklin Grove in Lee County brought forth a valuable compilation of local history: *Pages From the Past*, by Adella Helmershausen. In addition to an account of the settlement and growth of



Franklin Grove, the book contains many genealogies and a large number of photographs.

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Until a short time ago Calhoun County was one of the few Illinois counties unrepresented by a volume recounting its history. Recently, however, a ninety-three page pamphlet, entitled *History of Calhoun County*, by George W. Carpenter of Hardin supplied the deficiency.

"The present account," the author states in his preface, "is written to give the general reader or the student of history a broad outline of the county's development." The twelve chapter headings indicate the fulfillment of this purpose:

- I The Indians, the First Inhabitants
- II Early Explorers
- III Early Settlers
- IV The Formation of Calhoun County
- V Early Villages and Communities
- VI Population and Population Changes
- VII History of Calhoun Schools
- VIII History of Calhoun Churches
- IX Transportation and Industries
- X Social Life
- XI Calhoun County in Politics
- XII 1913-1933

An appendix contains a list of important dates in Calhoun County history prior to 1863.

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Publication No. 5 of the Augustana Historical Society is dedicated to the memory of Dr. C. W. Foss, the Society's founder and former president. The volume contains an appreciation of Doctor Foss by George M. Stephenson; a translation of the diary kept by L. P. Esbjörn on a trip from Sweden to New York in 1849; Reports to the American Home Missionary Society from cities in Northern



Illinois, 1849-1856; Sources of the original constitution of the Augustana Synod; Early letters to Erland Carlsson, 1853 to 1857; and a list of Sources on Revolutionary Europe, 1789-1848, from the Charles XV Collection in the Augustana College Library. Readers interested in this publication should communicate with the Augustana Historical Society, Denkmann Memorial Library, Rock Island.

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Publication of the official history of the 42nd, or "Rainbow," Division, A. E. F., has been announced for the spring of 1936. The book is being written by Gen. Henry J. Reilly, and will be published by the F. J. Heer Printing Co., Columbus, Ohio.

One Illinois Regiment—the 149th Field Artillery—was included in the Rainbow Division, and Henry J. Reilly was its colonel. Readers of the *Journal* wishing to obtain copies of the Official History can secure them from the Heer Printing Co. The book will sell for \$3.00 a copy.

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The latest publication of the Abraham Lincoln Association, of Springfield, is a history of the capital city of Illinois entitled, "*Here I Have Lived: A History of Lincoln's Springfield, 1821-1865*." The title is a phrase from Lincoln's farewell address to the people of Springfield at the time of his departure for his first inauguration. The book serves the dual purpose of depicting the origin and growth of a fairly typical mid-western community, and providing a more detailed study of Lincoln's Springfield environment than has hitherto been available. The author is the editor of this *Journal*.

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The *Ozark News* is the title of an interesting little paper which L. O. Trigg, editor and publisher of the *Eldorado Daily Journal*, has been issuing for several years as a part of his campaign to make the Illinois Ozarks better known



to the people of this state. Descriptions of the country, personal items and accounts of the tours which Mr. Trigg conducts each year make it of interest to anyone familiar with the territory with which it is concerned.

Illinoisans—particularly those who reside in the northern half of the state—are too often unaware of the rugged and picturesque beauty of the Illinois Ozark region. There are indications, however, that the work of Mr. Trigg and other missionaries is beginning to bring results, for the people of the state seem to be turning in increasing numbers to the hills of southern Illinois for recreation and scenic enjoyment.

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Exactly seventy-seven years after the event, the Benjamin Mills Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, dedicated a tablet to mark the spot where Abraham Lincoln spoke in Greenville on September 13, 1858. Lincoln's address at Greenville was one of many he delivered during the course of his famous contest with Douglas for election to the United States Senate. Two days later the two men met at Jonesboro for their third joint debate.

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The Livingston County Board of Supervisors have approved the erection, on the court house lawn at Pontiac, of a granite monument in memory of Pontiac, chief of the Ottawa Indians, from whom the city derived its name.

The monument will be constructed of split granite boulders. On its face will be a head of Pontiac in bas relief, the work of the late M. L. Young, of Pontiac. Underneath the head a bronze plaque, containing a brief biography of Pontiac prepared by the Illinois State Historical Society, is to be placed.

The proposal to erect the marker was presented to the supervisors by County Judge Roy Sesler and Dr. John H.



Ryan, president of the Livingston County Historical Society.

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Prehistoric mounds covering an area of 100 acres have remained practically unknown until last summer, when University of Chicago students under the leadership of Dr. Fay-Cooper Cole made the first scientific investigation of the site. The mounds are located near the Ohio River, on the Illinois side, eight miles east of Paducah.

The largest mound is thirty feet high and covers an area of almost two acres. This and two other mounds are of the pyramid type. Others of the group are smaller and resemble low hillocks.

According to Doctor Cole, the proximity of the site to five rivers—the Ohio, Tennessee, Cumberland, Wabash and Mississippi—made it a natural trading place. Last summer's investigations yielded positive evidence of intimate connection between prehistoric groups in Ohio, Arkansas, and Illinois, and pronounced indications of Central and South American influences.

"The pyramids or mounds were the center of aboriginal life," said Doctor Cole. "These mounds were not for burial, as in the Woodland group, but served as structures for buildings. Below the old turf line is the water-borne material of the Woodland culture.

"Some Woodland phases are 2,000 years old. They are distinguished by definite pottery shapes, with designs cut in, and stone projective points of the spear or dagger type. The Mississippi group had small points for bow and arrow. The Mississippi houses were more advanced. These people were an agricultural type, while the Woodlanders were a hunting people. Both had to get along without any domesticated animals except the dog and the turkey. The horse was unknown. There were no wheels. Their main



production was corn and it was these people who started the custom of planting in hills."

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### CONTRIBUTORS

Laurence M. Larson is Professor of History at the University of Illinois and President of the Board of Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library. Theodore C. Pease is a member of the same faculty, and the Editor of the Illinois Historical Collections. Aubrey Starke graduated from Harvard in 1925 and received the degree of Master of Arts from the same institution in 1927. From 1927 to 1929 he was an instructor in English at Northwestern University. He is the author of *Sidney Lanier: A Biographical and Critical Study* (1933), and of various articles on literary and historical subjects. He lives at Centralia. Harry E. Pratt is a member of the faculty of Illinois Wesleyan University and a frequent contributor to the Society's publications. Dr. George H. Weaver is President of the Society of Medical History of Chicago.



# INDEX

**Note.** By mistake this volume of the Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society was not paged continuously. No. 1 of Vol. 28 is paged 5-103, and Nos. 2, 3 and 4 are paged 5-324. This index, therefore, is in two parts. Part One indexes only No. 1 of Vol. 28, while Part Two, which begins on page 330, indexes Nos. 2, 3, and 4 of Vol. 28.

## PART ONE

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